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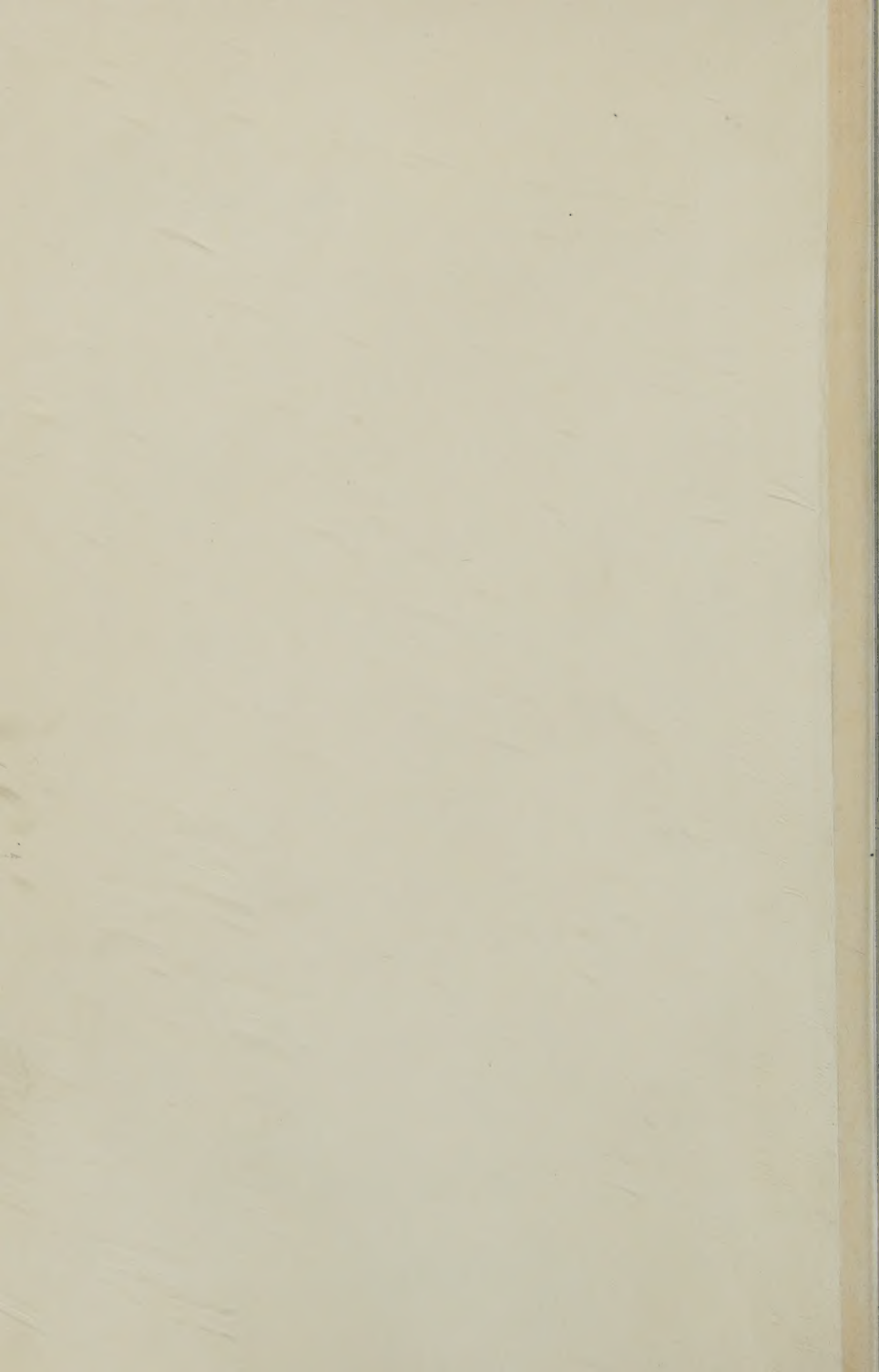
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AN
ACCOUNT
OF THE
PROCEEDINGS
OF THE
MERCHANTS, MANUFACTURERS,
AND OTHERS,
CONCERNED IN THE
Wool and Woollen Trade
OF
GREAT BRITAIN,
IN THEIR
APPLICATION TO PARLIAMENT,

That the Laws respecting the Exportation of Wool might not be altered, in arranging the Union with Ireland, but left to the Wisdom of the Imperial Parliament, if such a measure should hereafter appear to be just and expedient.

LONDON:

Printed by W. Phillips, George Yard, Lombard Street.

1800.

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AN ACCOUNT OF THE PROCEEDINGS OF
THE MERCHANTS, MANUFACTURERS,
AND OTHERS, CONCERNED IN THE
WOOL AND WOOLLEN TRADE OF
GREAT BRITAIN, &c.

THE Committee of Merchants, Manufacturers, and others, who have lately met at the Guildhall Coffee-house, in London, for the purpose of representing to the Legislature, the very serious and alarming consequences to be apprehended from a Repeal of the Laws Prohibiting the Exportation of Wool, in arranging the Union with Ireland, have deemed it becoming and necessary, on the behalf of themselves, as the conductors of the great national cause of our first manufacture, as well as for the eventual future advantage of the Manufacturers of this kingdom, that a Public Record of the Transactions and the Proceedings rela-

tive to the same should be made. With these views and motives it is, that a limited number of the following work has been printed for the use of the Deputies and others immediately concerned in our Woollen Trade. It consists of—

1. Copy of the 6th and 7th Resolutions of the Two Houses of the Parliament of Ireland respecting an Union of the Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland.—2. The Petition of the Merchants, Factors, Warehousemen and others concerned in the Wool and Woollen Trade, residing in London, presented to both Houses of Parliament.—3. Observations on the Subject of the Petition.—4. The Speech of Edward Law, Esq. before the House of Lords, as Counsel for the Petitioners.—5. Evidence, on oath, of the Manufacturers and others, given before the House of Lords.—6. A correct Statement of the Debates in the House of Commons on the Subject of Wool.—7. Speech of Thomas Plumer, Esq. as Counsel for
the

the Petitioners, on summing up before the
Lords.*

By order of the Committee,

JOHN MAITLAND,

Chairman.

Guildhall Coffee-house,

June 3, 1800.

* The business of the Petition to the House of Commons was conducted precisely in the same manner as that before the Lords.

NAMES

NAMES OF THE GENTLEMEN WHO
FORMED THE COMMITTEE.

WOOL TRADE OF LONDON.

FACTORS AND WAREHOUSEMEN.

Mr. Andrews,	Mr. Maitland,
Bowerbank,	Pearse,
Brunsdon,	Perring,
Burford,	Shephard,
Clementson,	Sevaine,
Dalby,	Telford,
Havard,	Townshend,
Hilton,	Walford,
Leach,	Wansey,
Maclean,	Whitehead.

WOOLSTAPLERS.

Mr. Kitchen,	Mr. Oakley,
Moulden,	Riley,
Newson,	Vaman.
Nottige,	

FROM

FROM LEEDS.

Mr. Cookson,
Fisher,
Gott,
Linsley,
Markland,
Stancliffe,
Wilby.

FROM HUDDERSFIELD
& SADDLEWORTH.

Mr. Atkinson,
Crowder, (*agent*
for Sir John
Ramsden, Bart.)
Houghton,
Radcliffe,
Whitacre.

FROM BRADFORD.

Mr. Hardy,
Hustler,
Pollard.

FROM WAKEFIELD.

Mr. Batly,
Lumb,
Naylor.

FROM HALIFAX.

Mr. Bramley,
Edwards,
Greenup,
Rawdon.

FROM COLNE AND
BURNLY.

Mr. Hitchnon,
Maffey.

FROM KETTERING.

Mr. Satchell.

FROM ROCHDALE.

Mr. Hamer.

FROM

FROM GLOUCESTER.

Mr. Cripps, *Cirencester*Sheppard, *Uley*

Lewis,

Wathen, } *Stroud*

Willis.

FROM DEVON.

Mr. Sheppard.

FROM SOMERSET.

Mr. Mears, *Frome*FROM SHEPTON-
MALLET.

Mr. Jenkins.

FROM SHREWSBURY.

Mr. Cooke.

FROM MARKET
HARBORO.

Mr. Clark.

FROM BUNBURY.

Mr. Snow.

FROM ESSEX.

Mr. Finch,

Start,

Nottidge.

FROM NORWICH.

Mr. Gurney,

Harvey,

Taylor.

EXTRACT

No. I.

EXTRACT
FROM THE
RESOLUTIONS
OF THE
TWO HOUSES
OF THE
PARLIAMENT OF IRELAND,
RESPECTING AN UNION OF THE KINGDOMS OF
GREAT BRITAIN AND IRELAND.

Ordered to be printed 2d April, 1800.

RESOLVED,

THAT, for the same purpose, it would be fit to propose, as the sixth article of Union, That his Majesty's subjects of Great Britain and Ireland shall, from and after the first day of January, one thousand eight hundred and one, be entitled to the same privileges, and be on the same footing as to encouragements and
A bounties

bounties on the like articles, being the growth, produce, or manufacture of either kingdom respectively, and generally in respect of trade and navigation in all ports and places in the United Kingdom and its dependencies: and that in all treaties made by his Majesty, his heirs, and successors, with any Foreign power, his Majesty's subjects of Ireland shall have the same privileges, and be on the same footing, as his Majesty's subjects of Great Britain: that from the first day of January, one thousand eight hundred and one, all prohibitions and bounties on the export of articles, the growth, produce, or manufacture of either country to the other, shall cease and determine, and that the said article shall thenceforth be exported from one country to the other without duty or bounty on such export: that all articles, the growth, produce, or manufacture of either kingdom (not hereinafter enumerated as subject to specific duties) shall from henceforth be imported into each country from the other free from duty, other than such countervailing duty as shall be annexed to the several articles contained in the Schedule No. I. and that the articles hereinafter enumerated, shall be subject, for the period of twenty years from the Union, on importation into each country from

the

the other, to the duties specified in the Schedule No. II. annexed to this article, viz.

Apparel,
 Brafs, wrought,
 Cabinet ware,
 Coaches and other carriages,
 Copper, wrought,
 Cottons,
 Glafs,
 Haberdashery,
 Hats,
 Tin plates, wrought iron, and hardware,
 Lace, gold and silver; gold and silver
 thread,
 Bullion for lace, pearl and spangles,
 Millinery,
 Paper, stained,
 Pottery,
 Saddlery,
 Silk manufacture,
 Stockings.

And that the woollen manufactures shall pay on importation into each country, the duties now payable on importation into Ireland; salt and hops on importation into Ireland, duties not exceeding those which are now paid in Ireland; and coals on importation to be subject to burthens not exceeding those to which they are now subject; that calicoes and muslins be subject and liable to the duties now payable on the

same, until the fifth day of January one thousand eight hundred and eight, and from and after the said day, the said duties shall be annually reduced in such proportions and at such periods as shall hereafter be enacted, so as that the said duties shall stand at ten per cent. from and after the fifth day of January, one thousand eight hundred and sixteen, until the fifth day of January, which shall be in the year one thousand eight hundred and twenty-one; and that cotton yarn and cotton twist shall also be subject and liable to the duties now payable upon the same until the fifth day of January, one thousand eight hundred and eight, and from and after the said day, the said duties shall be annually reduced at such times and in such proportions as shall be hereafter enacted, so as that all duties shall cease on the said articles from and after the fifth day of January, one thousand eight hundred and sixteen: that any articles of the growth, produce, or manufacture of either country, which are or may be subject to internal duty, or to duty on the materials of which they are composed, may be made subject on their importation into each country respectively from the other, to such countervailing duty as shall appear to be just and reasonable in respect to such internal duty or duties on the materials; and that for the said purposes, the articles specified

cified in the said Schedule No. I. should upon importation into Ireland be subject to the duty which shall be set forth therein, liable to be taken off, diminished, or increased, in the manner herein specified; and that upon the like export of the like articles from each country to the other respectively, a drawback shall be given equal in amount to the countervailing duty payable on the articles hereinbefore specified on the import into the same country with the other; and that in like manner, in future it shall be competent to the United Parliament to impose any new or additional countervailing duties, or to take off or diminish such existing countervailing duties, as may appear on like principles to be just and reasonable, in respect of any future or additional internal duty on any article of the growth, produce, or manufacture of either country, or of any new or additional duty on any materials of which such article may be composed, or of any abatement of the same; and that when such new or additional countervailing duty shall be so imposed on the import of any article into either country from the other, a drawback equal in amount to such countervailing duty shall be given in like manner on the export of every such article respectively from the same country: that all articles the growth, produce, or manufacture of either kingdom, when exported through the other, shall

in all cases be exported subject to the same charges as if they had been exported directly from the country of which they were the growth, produce, or manufacture: that all duty charged on the import of foreign or colonial goods into either country, shall, on their export to the other, be either drawn back, or the amount, if any be retained, shall be placed to the credit of the country to which they shall be so exported, so long as the general expences of the empire shall be defrayed by proportional contributions; provided nothing herein shall extend to take away any duty, bounty, or prohibition which exists with respect to corn, meal, malt, flour, and biscuit; but that the same may be regulated, varied, or repealed from time to time as the United Parliament shall deem expedient.

SCHEDULE, No. I.

Of the articles to be charged with countervailing duties upon importation from Great Britain into Ireland, according to the sixth article of Union.

Articles to be charged with a countervailing duty in Ireland:

Beer,	Silk,
Glass,	Spirits,
Leather,	Sugar, refined,
Paper, stained,	Sweets,
Paper,	Tobacco.

SCHEDULE II.

SCHEDULE II.

Of the articles charged with the duties specified upon importation into Great Britain and Ireland respectively, according to the sixth article of Union.

Apparel,	} Ten per cent. on the true value.
Brass, wrought,	
Cabinet ware,	
Coaches and other carriages,	
Copper, wrought,	
Cottons, except calicoes and muslins,	
Glass,	
Haberdashery,	
Hats,	
Tin plates, wrought iron, and hardware	
Lace, gold and silver; gold and silver thread,	
Bullion for lace, pearl and spangles,	
Millinery,	
Paper, stained,	
Pottery,	
Saddlery & other manufactured leather	
Silk manufacture,	
Stockings.	

RESOLVED,

That, for the same purpose, it would be fit to propose, as the seventh article of Union, That the charge arising from the payment of the interest, and the sinking fund for the reduction of the principal of the debt incurred in either kingdom before the Union, shall continue to be separately defrayed by Great Britain and Ireland respectively: that for the space of twenty years after the Union shall take place, the contribution of Great Britain and Ireland respectively towards the expenditure of the United Kingdom, in each year, shall be defrayed in the proportion of fifteen parts for Great Britain, and two parts for Ireland: that at the expiration of the said twenty years, the future expenditure of the United Kingdom (other than the interest and charges of the debt to which either country shall be separately liable) shall be defrayed in such proportion as the United Parliament shall deem just and reasonable, upon a comparison of the real value of the exports and imports of the respective countries, upon an average of the three years next preceding the period of revision; or on a comparison of the value of the quantities of the following articles consumed within the respective countries,

tries, on a similar average; viz. beer, spirits, sugar, wine, tea, tobacco, and malt; or, according to the aggregate proportion resulting from both these considerations combined; or, on a comparison of the amount of income in each country, estimated from the produce, for the same period, of a general tax (if such shall have been imposed) on the same descriptions of income in both countries; and that the parliament of the United Kingdom shall afterwards proceed in like manner to revise and fix the said proportions, according to the same rules or any of them, at periods not more distant than twenty years nor less than seven years from each other, unless previous to any such period the United Parliament shall have declared, as hereinafter provided, that the general expences of the empire shall be defrayed indiscriminately by equal taxes imposed on the like articles in both countries: that, for the defraying the said expences according to the rules above laid down, the revenues of Ireland shall hereafter constitute a consolidated fund, upon which, charges equal to the interest of her debt and sinking fund shall in the first instance be charged, and the remainder shall be applied towards defraying the proportion of
the

the general expence of the United Kingdom to which Ireland may be liable in each year: that the proportion of contribution to which Great Britain and Ireland will by these articles be liable, shall be raised by such taxes in each kingdom respectively as the parliament of the United Kingdom shall from time to time deem fit; provided always, that in regulating the taxes in each country by which their respective proportions shall be levied, no article in Ireland shall be liable to be taxed to any amount exceeding that which will be thereafter payable in England on the like article: that if at the end of any year any surplus shall accrue from the revenues of Ireland, after defraying the interest, sinking fund, and proportional contribution, and separate charges to which the said country is liable, either taxes shall be taken off to the amount of such surplus, or the surplus shall be applied by the United Parliament to local purposes in Ireland, or to make good any deficiency which may arise in her revenues in time of peace, or be invested by the commissioners of the national debt of Ireland in the funds, to accumulate for the benefit of Ireland at compound interest, in case of her contribution in time of war, provided the surplus so to

accu-

accumulate, shall at no future period be suffered to exceed the sum of five millions: that all monies hereafter to be raised by loan in peace or war, for the service of the United Kingdom, by the parliament thereof, shall be considered to be a joint debt, and the charges thereof shall be borne by the respective countries in the proportion of their respective contributions; provided that if at any time in raising their respective contributions hereby fixed for each kingdom, the parliament of the United Kingdom shall judge it fit to raise a greater proportion of such respective contributions in one kingdom within the year than in the other, or to set apart a greater proportion of sinking fund for the liquidation of the whole or any part of the loan raised on account of the one country, than of that raised on account of the other country, then such part of the said loan, for the liquidation of which different provisions have been made for the respective countries, shall be kept distinct, and shall be borne by each separately, and only that part of the said loan be deemed joint and common for the reduction of which the respective countries shall have made provision in the proportion of their respective contributions: that if at any future day

day the separate debt of each kingdom respectively shall have been liquidated, or the values of their respective debts (estimated according to the amount of the interest and annuities attending the same, of the sinking fund applicable to the reduction thereof, and the period within which the whole capital of such debt shall appear to be redeemable by such sinking fund) shall be to each other in the same proportion with the respective contributions of each kingdom respectively, or where the amount by which the value of the larger of such debts shall vary from such proportion shall not exceed one hundredth part of the said value, and if it shall appear to the United Parliament that the respective circumstances of the two countries will thenceforth admit of their contributing indiscriminately, by equal taxes imposed on the same articles in each, to the future general expence of the United Kingdom, it shall be competent to the said United Parliament to declare, that all future expence thenceforth to be incurred, together with the interest and charges of all joint debts contracted previous to such declaration, shall be so defrayed indiscriminately, by equal taxes imposed on the same articles in each country, and thenceforth from time to time,

as circumstances may require, to impose and apply such taxes accordingly; subject only to such particular exemptions or abatements in Ireland, and that part of Great Britain called Scotland, as circumstances may appear from time to time to demand; that from the period of such declaration, it shall no longer be necessary to regulate the contribution of the two countries towards the future general expences, according to any specific proportion, or according to any of the rules hereinbefore prescribed; provided nevertheless, that the interest or charges which may remain on account of any part of the separate debt with which either country is chargeable, and which shall not be liquidated or consolidated proportionably as above, shall, until extinguished, continue to be defrayed by separate taxes in each country: that a sum not less than the sum which has been granted by the parliament of Ireland, on the average of the last six years, as premiums for the internal encouragement of agriculture or manufactures, or for the maintaining institutions for pious and charitable purposes, shall be applied, for the period of twenty years after the Union, to such local purposes, in such manner as the parliament of the United Kingdom shall direct:

direct: that from and after the first day of January one thousand eight hundred and one, all public revenue arising from the territorial dependencies of the United Kingdom, shall be applied to the general expenditure of the empire, in the proportions of the respective contributions of the two countries.

PETITION presented April 23d, 1800.*

*To the Honorable the Commons of Great Britain
in Parliament assembled.*

*The Petition of the Merchants, Factors, Ware-
housemen, and Others, concerned in the Wool
and Woollen Trade, residing in London,*

SHEWETH,

THAT your Petitioners observe, with inexpressible concern, that in the projected arrangement of the Union with the Sister Kingdom, she proposes, That the existing laws, prohibiting the Exportation of British Wool, should be repealed, so far as relates to herself, whilst on her part she claims the continuance of protecting duties for her Woollen Manufactures.

That your Petitioners humbly conceive and believe, that the growth of Wool in Great Britain is not sufficient to supply the Manufactures thereof with a quantity equal to the present demand for Home Consumption and Foreign Markets, so that if any part is suffered to be taken away, your Petitioners and the Manufacturers must experience very great injury.

* A like Petition, *mutatis mutandis*, was presented to the House of Lords on the 30th of April, 1800.

That

That your Petitioners are most seriously alarmed, in case British Wool should be permitted to be exported, That under pretence of carrying it to Ireland, great quantities would be conveyed to Foreign Countries, without the possibility of prevention, (especially in times of Peace) and that the facility with which it might be passed from various parts of Ireland, free from detection, furnishes strong apprehensions that still larger quantities would find their way into Foreign Countries, whereby the British Merchant and Manufacturer would suffer, and the enemies and rivals of the United Kingdoms be furnished with means of supplanting both your Petitioners, and the new Members of the Empire in Foreign Markets.

Your Petitioners therefore humbly pray,
That no alteration may be made in the existing laws, so far as they prohibit the Exportation of Wool; and that your Petitioners may be heard by their Counsel at the Bar of your Honorable House.

Maitlands, Sterry, & Nettleshipp
George Whitehead & Son
Jones, Havard & Jones
J. N. & B. Pearse
Fryer, Telford, Liddell & Smallman
Bowerbank, Monkhouse & Co.
Wansey Jefferies & Co.

Richard

Richard Burford
 Edward & Thomas Sheppard
 John & Philip Perring
 Thomas Andrews & Co.
 Andrews & Brooke
 R. J. & E. Swaine & Co.
 Streatfield & West
 Clementson, Borradaile & Jackson
 Greens & Walford
 King & Snow
 Stainton & Hodgson
 William Rawson & Co.
 Royds & Brockbank
 Charles Brunson & Co.
 John Yeatherd
 John Lightfoot & Co.
 John Pollard & Co.
 Storks, Blythe & Co.
 Relph & Todhunter
 Tiplady, Lloyd & Pritchard
 James Bushell
 Hornyold & Mills
 Blake & Paxton
 Edward Dowling
 Edward Dowling, junior
 Charles & John Goss West
 Jones & Wakeman
 Wetherill & Fayle
 T. & S. Wallington
 Richard Carpenter Smith, Sons & Co.

William Puckle & Co.
 R. & S. Bousfield
 Favell, Bousfield & Son
 B. Hitchcock
 William & Samuel Wright & Co.
 Beddome, Fysh & Co.
 Lonsdale & Tomson
 John Wallace
 Thomas Atwood
 Nath. Robarts
 Brittens & Meek
 Robert Lawton
 Gustard & Young
 F. Lewis
 Henry Smith
 W. & H. Marchant
 G. Griffiths
 Charles Ivatts
 Perry & Rigg
 W. Stebbing
 Thomas Dawson
 E. J. Pinegar
 William Ghrimes
 John Smith & King
 Thomas Kidder
 J. Berridge
 Morley, Wilson & Morley
 E. & S. Hall & Co.
 John Newcomb & Son

Joseph

Joseph Lobb & Son
 Mytton, Jones & Owen, *Delobran*
 John Kynaston
 Geldard & Ridley, *Richmond*
 Howell, Taylor & Co.
 John Mason
 J. & George Scott
 Hankinson, Haydock & Burls
 Weddell & Till
 S. Nicklin
 Vesie, Wyer & Swift
 Leaver Legg
 Appleby & Arlington
 Rd. Rankin
 Joseph Woods & Son
 Thomas Spooner
 Robert Irvine
 William Mills
 Maund, Wicksteed & Co.
 Puckle, Costeker & Co.
 John Parry
 John Peacock
 Richard Otley
 Joseph Chadwick
 Joseph Addington
 George Hardisty
 Edward Roberts
 Hurd & Lonsdale
 Jeffrey, Ludlam & Co.

William Hodgson
 Parker & Hinchcliff
 William Warberton
 William Lee
 John Augustus Streit
 Sheppard & Chapman
 Sarah Lawrance
 G. Seddon & Sons
 Smith, Trower, & Co.
 Wm. Anderfon
 Wm. Saint
 James Carter
 Barlow & Marsh
 R. Roycroft Wrather
 Joseph Sumner
 Burne & Co.
 John Johnson
 F. H. Alford
 Bradley & Paley
 T. & I. Barber

PETITIONS

PETITIONS were also presented from

CORNWALL. . . 1

DEVONSHIRE.

Exeter	}					
Totnefs						
Tiverton						4
Tavistock						

GLOUCESTER.

Gloucester	}					
Cirencester.						3
Painfwick						

LANCASHIRE.

Bury	}					
Colne						
Rochdale						
Preston						6
Burnley						
Haslingdon						

LEICESTER.

Market Harboro 1

B 3 MONT-

MONTGOMERY.

Welch Pool 1

NORFOLK.

Norwich 1

OXFORD.

Witney	}		2
Banbury			

SOMERSET.

Frome	}		3
Western Parts of the County of Somerset			
Wivelscombe			

SHROPSHIRE.

Shrewsbury 1

SUFFOLK.

Bury St. Edmunds & the neighbouring towns	}		2
Sudbury			

SURRY.

Southwark 1

YORK-

YORKSHIRE.

Leeds	}	
Huddersfield		
Halifax		
Bradford		
Wakefield		 9
Haworth		
Addingham		
Keighly		
Skipton		

WESTMORELAND.

Kendal	1
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WORCESTERSHIRE.

Kidderminster	1
-------------------------	---

WILTSHIRE.

Salisbury	1
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No. III.

OBSERVATIONS,

*Which were annexed to a printed copy of the
Petition, and distributed to the Members of both
Houses of Parliament.*

OUR Native WOOL, has always been acknowledged to be of the highest importance to this island, and never was more so than at the present period. It possesses an undoubted superiority over the rest of Europe, for such fabrics as are of the greatest utility and most extended consumption; and the wise policy of our Legislature has insured this invaluable material to our own manufacturers by laws strictly confining it within our own shores, under the severest penalties.

This policy is founded on the self-evident principle, that it is better to maintain our own industrious workmen, and enrich our manufacturers and merchants, by working up our native produce, than to suffer it to become the instrument of a rival trade in other countries.

The vast body of useful men, and their families, employed in the manufacture of wool,
give

give life to agriculture, and raise the value of lands, by the consumption of its productions, whilst they largely contribute to the public revenue by the use of various articles of excise and customs, which are paid for by their productive labours, and give employment and support to another very large portion of the inhabitants of this kingdom.

The woollens of Great Britain have found their way into every part of the world. Superiority in the raw material, assisted by the improvements in machinery, have increased the consumption to such a degree, that it is an uncontrovertible fact, the wools of our island are insufficient to supply the present demand.

The amount of woollen fabrics exported in the year is nearly eight millions and a half sterling, which is more than a fourth of all the exports of British produce and manufactures. This immense sum, with the addition of freight, commission, and insurance, exceeds one-third of the whole rental of our landed property, and *is nearly a clear profit paid by foreigners to this island.*

Ships, carriages, machinery, roads, canals, buildings, &c. constitute that part of our capital to which, with the ingenuity of our manufacturers, we are so highly indebted for our
rapid

rapid accessions of wealth and power. How much of these owe their existence and support to the great staple article, WOOL, the material of our earliest, most extensive, and most valuable manufacture, cannot with facility be stated. It is highly probable that one-fifth of this stock is employed by the woollen trade; and all the charges of making and maintaining the same, and the support of the many thousands so employed, must consequently be derived from this manufacture.

That manufacturing industry, and the use of machinery, do increase the wealth and population of a country, and raise the value of its lands, are truths too obvious to be enlarged upon. It is of the most notorious publicity, that within the last forty years, lands have increased in value more than three-fold, in districts rendered flourishing by these causes; and it is equally well known, that by the decline of manufactures in other parts of the kingdom, the poor's rates have increased so enormously as nearly to equal the rental of the land; and, in some instances, to exceed it. The woollen trade has grown to its present magnitude and importance, under the obvious and most natural encouragement of laws to keep the raw material at home; and the petitioners have no other wish than for a continuance

ance of this security, under which they and their ancestors have so successfully exerted themselves.

The British manufacturers observe, with deep concern, that woollens, our staple manufacture, must meet the Irish woollens in the market of that kingdom, under the weight of a specific, protecting duty, and in our own market, under the pressure of higher taxes and higher wages; that, “the British Parliament, by laying a duty of thirty-three pounds per cent. on German linens, and admitting Irish, duty free,” has given “in effect so much bounty on Irish linens, their staple manufacture, as the same thirty-three pounds per cent. on Irish linens would produce;” that this duty on the Linens imported from Ireland, “would amount to a million sterling; which million, equal almost to” the “Peace Establishment” of Ireland, is, “in effect raised on the British consumer, to be paid to the Irish linen merchant;” that though Great-Britain raises a revenue of five shillings and six-pence a chaldron on her own coals carried Coast-ways, they are to be exported to Ireland duty free.* And when to this striking contrast of circum-

* The Words between Commas, are copied from the Speech of the Right Honourable Lord Viscount Castlereagh, in the Irish House of Commons, February 5th, 1800, Page 31.

stances,

stances, it is added, that in the arrangement of regulations so beneficial for Ireland, the contemplation of the Legislature was directed to compensate the Sister Kingdom for her consumption of our woollens, it will afford a very cogent argument in favour of their humble Petition.

It has long been incontrovertibly established, that one pack of certain sorts of English wool, will enable the French to work up two packs of their own, in articles they cannot otherwise make. On this account, they are anxious to obtain it by every means in their power; and it is much to be feared, that the extreme difficulty of preventing the smuggling of British wool to France, and to the other rivals of our trade, as well during its passage towards Ireland, as from the extensive coasts of that island, will be very much increased. This probable loss of our staple commodity would be highly detrimental to both countries, and would particularly aggravate the sufferings and loss of the British manufacturers.

The manufacturers and dealers in woollens have property too large and pledges too dear to them, at stake, to be for a moment indifferent to the general prosperity and safety of the Empire. They hope and expect the most beneficial consequences from an Union with the
Sister

Sister Kingdom; and if it were possible to place both kingdoms on the same footing with respect to their burthens, they perceive no ground upon which, as liberal men and fellow-subjects, they could wish to withhold a participation in all the fruits of their long-continued labour and industry. But this is not the case. It is their own ruin they wish to avert. Great Britain pays for the interest and charges of her National Debt eighteen times as much as Ireland for her's, which she is to continue exclusively to bear: Ireland is besides a cheap country, peculiarly adapted for the establishment of manufactures. That she may flourish, is the sincere wish of every good subject; but the British Manufacturers cannot, without alarm, contemplate the prospect of their raw material, their machinery, their mercantile and manufacturing capital, and the most ingenious of their workmen, migrating to a land where the same laws, the same language, cheapness of labour, and of food, with taxes comparatively nothing, invite them to settle and under-sell those who originally established the manufactory, and raised it to its present importance.

The manufacturers of British wool, are not competent to describe the extended and most ruinous political consequences, which must follow

low the decay and destruction of our chief manufacture. They have confined their observations to what immediately concerns themselves and their connections. They look forward with apprehensions, that the exportation of their wools will change the current of their wealth, destroy their industry and enterprize, deprive the poor of their employment, add to the poor's rates, and diminish the rental of the land. Their industry and enterprize has hitherto more than kept pace with the public exigencies. They have chearfully borne a large part of the burthens called for by the imperious necessity of the times, and it is their earnest prayer that they may not be deprived of the means of supporting it.

Guildhall Coffee-House, April 22, 1800.

No. IV.

S P E E C H

OF

EDWARD LAW, Esq.

IN THE HOUSE OF LORDS,

As Counsel for the Petitioners,

On the 1st of MAY, 1800.

MY LORDS,

I HAVE the honor to attend your Lordships on behalf of a most important and considerable class of his Majesty's subjects engaged in the prosecution of the earliest and most valuable branch of our national commerce, who, approving as they highly and zealously do, the general system of regulations proposed to be adopted, in order to consolidate, secure, and improve the

the strength and resources of two countries, happily united under one common sovereign; having the same general interests, habits, and laws, the same subjects of apprehension and danger, and the same great objects of policy in respect to foreign powers, regret nevertheless that this system has, in common with other systems of projected improvement, such a portion of alloy mixed with the advantages and blessings which it is in other respects calculated (and, we trust, destined also) to produce, as in their apprehension threatens the destruction of those valuable interests, which it has been hitherto the wisdom and policy of this country to protect and encourage—a mischief certainly not within the immediate contemplation, and still less within the intention of the legislature to occasion. They trust they shall not in your Lordships' impartial judgment be esteemed, as some have thought fit to pronounce them “a few interested individuals,” appearing for themselves only at your Lordships' bar; for they appear here not only for themselves and their own immediate and peculiar interest but for the common interest, combined with theirs of almost the whole aggregate mass of trades, mechanical arts and manufactures, which this country knows, all of which derive in a considerable degree their sustentation and nourishment

ment from this the earliest, most extensive, and most valuable branch of our national commerce, and source of our national prosperity.

To state to your Lordships the extent of it, would be to state that it is at least one-third in point of export of the amount of all our national exports; that it is a fourth of the national income, as derived from all its various sources: its magnitude is so important, its connection with the vital and best interests of this country so close and intimate, that it has been a principal object of attention in the framing of the statutes which appear upon your rolls from the earliest period of any ascertained acts of legislation in this country. It is however entitled to consideration not on the ground of any prescriptive policy respecting it, but it is further entitled to consideration; as it enriches the landholder in the first instance, by the large rent which it enables his manufacturing tenant to pay for the land he occupies, either for the purposes of habitation or trade, and in the enhanced price of every article which this soil produces; as it enriches the manufacturer in the second place who works up the wool and conducts it by various hands, and through various processes both of manual and mechanical labour to the ultimate state in which it becomes the subject of use and wear at home, and of exportation

for similar purposes abroad ;—as it enriches, in the third place, the dealer and artist in every article, which every description of manufacture requires or consumes from the habitation which protects him from the weather to the shoes on which he treads. And lastly, as it enriches the state itself, which derives a larger revenue from the consumption of so many articles, the subject of various duties of customs and excise, naturally occasioned by the demands of a population thus extended and encouraged. In order to give your Lordships some idea of its magnitude, I may venture to state, that there are no less than 1,500,000 persons who are immediately concerned in the operative branches of this vast manufacture; and if what Doctor Campbell in his Political Survey of the Kingdom, vol. ii. p. 157, states be true, “ That from the wool grower to the consumer a piece of broad cloth passes through an hundred different hands; and that there are near the same number of hands dependant on the woollen manufacture though not actually concerned in it,” I may assume that the trade directly and collaterally employs double the above-mentioned number of hands.

If we estimate then the magnitude of this question, according to the number of persons
interested

interested in it; it goes to nearly one-third of the intire population of this kingdom, estimating that population at what it is generally reckoned, namely, between nine and ten millions of persons. If we look at its annual produce, at its value and amount with respect both to foreign markets and home consumption, without stating in minute detail the quantity of wool actually produced in this country, it amounts at least to 600,000 packs, each pack being of the value of £.11 constituting a total of £.6,600,000 of actual produce, before it begins to be manufactured; and in its manufactured state, upon the smallest and most contracted estimate, being upon an average at least tripled in its value; some of it which undergoes a more laboured and expensive process, is of infinitely greater value, in proportion to the raw material, than what I have stated, but upon an average the actual quantity of annually manufactured goods is three times the amount last mentioned, that is £.19,800,000, or perhaps from that sum to twenty millions of substantial and annually produced capital to the country. What branch of trade belonging to this country is there that offers itself in such a shape to the consideration of your Lordships? I am therefore well assured that the application now made, and the repre-

sentation, which through their advocates, and by their evidence the Petitioners now seek to impress upon the minds of your Lordships will be received with the patience and attention which a subject of such transcendent importance seems to merit.

My Lords, I have principally considered, at present, the interest which individuals have, as personally connected in the profits of this trade. But, my Lords, considered with a reference to the revenue, it assumes a still more interesting aspect; it imports the country to consider most seriously before they put it in hazard,—and I am sure this House, at least, will consider it deeply and maturely; because, my Lords, you are not now engaged in the discussion of a question of fluctuating policy, which you may adopt to-day and renounce to-morrow; where, if there be any error in the principle itself, or in the means by which it is attempted to be carried into effect, it may, as in ordinary cases, be remedied by other and later acts of legislature. But the resolution which your Lordships shall pronounce to-day, as it will form one of the terms of that Union and confederation which is to be perpetual and unchangeable between the two nations, will be itself an irreversible resolution. There remains no competent

petent power in Parliament, so long as this Union shall endure, (and God grant that, when formed, it may endure for ever) of reconsidering the vote you shall come to upon the present question; for the United Parliament will possess no intrinsic means; nor, of course, can provide or reserve for itself any extrinsic resort, for the cure and redress of such an inconvenience, and therefore your Lordships are now to resolve, upon the subject before you, once and for ever. Your Petitioners feel themselves warranted therefore, in earnestly soliciting your Lordships maturely to consider that which so deeply interests them, and which, when resolved, admits of no palliation or amendment. Consider, my Lords, what has been the well-weighed and long-settled policy of your ancestors upon this subject. This is not a new trade, nor is it only a comparatively ancient trade; but it is the most ancient and the most important trade which the country possesses, which is, as my Lord Hale calls it, "The basis of all your commerce."—It is that to which the earliest and most anxious attention of Parliament has been at all times directed, in a variety of regulations adopted indeed according to fluctuating systems of policy at different periods, but for a period now of more than two hun-

dred years steadily directed to one point, steadily looking at the exclusive manufacture of our native wool, as the fixed principle and polar star of our commercial system, the principle being that this raw material, capable of being manufactured to so much advantage, contributing in so many various ways to the resources, advantage, and consequence of the state, as far as regards foreign powers, supplying so abundantly the materials of strength, both in respect of population and finance to ourselves, should be incommunicable to any other nation.—And I am to submit, on the part of your Petitioners, that the moment this Resolution, which is proposed to your Lordships for adoption, shall be, if (which God forbid) it shall be adopted, will open a door to indefinite contraband, will open a door which it will exceed your strength to shut.—When once the door is thrown open to the world at large, by the exportation of British wool to the coasts of Ireland, it will be impossible afterwards, by any regulations you can apply to the subject, by the vigilance of even a greater navy than you possess, or of officers of the revenue, much more numerous than any existing host of them, to prevent the clandestine exportation of wool from that country to the rest of the world.

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This valuable article of trade was first taken notice of in our Statutes, I believe in the time of Edward the First. Our statutes of which we have any account, go so little beyond that period, that we are not able to state much of what had been done upon the subject before. Lord Hale, who has pursued that subject as he has all others with an industry of research and an accuracy of investigation peculiar to that great man, finds that in 13 Edward I. there was, for the first time, a grant to the crown of a duty upon wool, wool fells, &c. for at that time, in the infancy of our commerce, it was the policy of this country to permit wool to be exported, and it then, for the first time, became the subject of financial regulation, and a source of revenue to the crown. At that time, when there was no adequate consumption for such an article, it must have perished and been useless to every body if its export had not been allowed; but the export of a raw material capable of being manufactured in the country is only allowable upon any just principles of political reason in the very infancy and feebleness of national commerce; from the moment it can be manufactured at home it becomes the policy of the country to apply the labour, the skill, and the industry of its subjects upon the

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material

material itself, and to export it at last in the most advanced and perfect state of workmanship, having embodied in it the wages paid for all the labour, skill, and industry of the inhabitants of the country which have been employed upon it, comprehending, of course, the taxes paid to the state itself by the manufacturers and others who have earned the wages which constitute so considerable a part of the price of the article exported. It was not till a later period of our history that we have been fully able to adopt that policy; but in the time of Edward III. we find several statutes totally prohibiting, under enormous penalties, the exportation of wool. In 11 Edward III. the exportation of wool, by denizens or strangers, is forbidden, under pain of death. In the 15 Edward III. a change of policy seems to have taken place, and liberty was then given to all merchants to export wools, paying the ancient customs. Within a short period afterwards, by the statute of the Staple, 27 Edward III. c. 1 and 2, merchant strangers were allowed to buy wool at the staples to transport them; but by c. 3, English, Welch, and Irish were prohibited to transport wools, under pain of death and loss of goods and lands. Afterwards by the statute of 38 Edward III. c. 6, the

the penalty of death upon transportation of wool was repealed, but the forfeiture of lands and goods was continued in force; and from that period to the present, British wool has been, with little interruption, the subject of general prohibition as an article of export. In the reign of Elizabeth, the exportation of live sheep was also prohibited with a view to prevent the carrying the original foundation of the manufacture itself out of the country.

This was prohibited by the penalty of loss of land, and by other penalties. From that time down to the last statute, the 12th of Charles II. the exportation of wool has been the subject of repeated prohibitions, under several heavy penalties, which have continued unrepealed from that time to the present moment. Thus it has been the steady policy of this country from the time of queen Elizabeth at least; for in the time of her predecessor Mary, we lost by the capture of Calais the last foreign staple for our wool which was fixed at that place. Since that time it has been the continued and invariable policy of the most enlightened statesmen in all periods of our history, to appropriate exclusively the wool of our country to the looms of our own manufacturers, to work it up wholly ourselves, and to weave, if I may say so, the wages of our skill

skill and of our labour into its very fabric, and make the foreign consumer pay the price of that skill and labour, together with the taxes of the manufacturer into the bargain, thereby making the whole redound to the private gain and advantage of the manufacturer, and merchant in the first instance, and to that of the State in the last: when I say it has been the policy of the most enlightened statesmen upon this subject, I allude particularly to a letter of advice written by the great Lord Bacon * to Sir George Villiers, who was at that time immediately about to be elevated by his sovereign king James the first, to the high station and dignities he afterwards so long held.—It is a letter full of the soundest and best instruction, in all points calculated to prepare and fit him for the exercise of the high public duties which he was about to have in charge. Among other things in addressing his advice to the future minister of his Sovereign upon the subject of our commerce; and in speaking of this very trade, he emphatically recommends the encouragement of our woollen manufactures in the following terms:—"Let us advance the native commodities of our own kingdom, and employ our

* Vol. I. p. 727.

own countrymen before strangers : let us turn the wools of the lands into cloaths and stuffs of our own growth ; it would set many thousand hands on work, and thereby one of the materials would by industry be multiplied to five, ten, and many times to twenty-five times more in the value being wrought."

This line of policy from the time when it was thus recommended, has, as far as we can trace it in our statute book, been regularly and uniformly observed ever since, and it would heretofore have seemed a sort of political heresy of no very venial kind to have intimated a doubt, whether permitting the exportation of this most valuable raw material would be injurious to the interests of our country.

But it may be asked, how does the permitted exportation of wool to Ireland necessarily involve the communication of it to foreign countries? My Lords, do not suffer yourselves to be deceived on this head : the moment that wool is made the subject of allowed export to Ireland, it is not all your dockets and your clearances, or any other system of check which can be devised, that will insure that the vessels laden therewith shall go to Ireland at all. All Europe and all America is open to them : but supposing that it even does go to Ireland in the first

first instance, when it has got there, what is to prevent its being re-exported to any other part of the world? The navy of Great Britain is not sufficient to shut up the multitude of other ports with which that country abounds, and from which this lucrative article of contraband might be speedily and easily diffused over the neighbouring nations of Europe. Its geographical situation in respect to France, renders it peculiarly easy with respect to that country. It therefore imports your Lordships to consider the proposed Resolution, in all its consequences, as involving the question of unlimited communication of this raw material to the whole world. For such will be the mediate, if not the immediate and direct consequence of this measure. If indeed, which is not the case, a redundancy of wool existed, and there was more wool in the market than our looms could conveniently occupy, it might become a question of disputable policy perhaps, whether this redundancy should not be suffered to discharge itself into foreign markets, but even so, I humbly conceive, the evil of foreign sale would preponderate. It would not be wise to habituate foreigners to carry on a manufacture, in the exclusive monopoly of which we are so deeply interested: the redundancy of one year might be well

well saved to supply the natural and probable deficiencies of another; but situated as we now are with an actual pinching scarcity of this article, which has decreased, and is yet decreasing—is it politic, is it rational, to give to others that which we want ourselves? To export, in order to reimport at an enhanced price, with accumulated freights and commission upon the article, for that must be the case, inasmuch as our looms demand a greater supply at present than the produce of our own country, yet undiminished by the participation of others, yields them. This deficiency must be supplied, if possible, *aliunde*; and if we increase this deficiency still further by exporting our own, if it is permitted to be dissipated either in the shape of authorized commerce, or to escape in the way of contraband, it must be brought back or replaced under circumstances most injurious to the manufacturers, and ultimately to every purchaser of woollen goods in the country.

But it may be said, Is it a fact that the quantity is diminishing? My Lords, we are prepared to substantiate that fact at your bar, by the most irrefragable evidence. The quantity that this country did produce, at a period no farther distant from the present than the year 1740, according to reports made to the Treasury

fury in that year, was no less than 738,000 packs. The quantity now produced is barely 600,000, and the demand infinitely exceeds the quantity produced. Let us then at least use our own wool to the extent in which it may be capable of supplying our wants. There is certainly a considerable addition to our manufacturing stock derived from Spanish wool; if a still further addition could be made to this, would any man doubt of making it, instead of lavishly communicating our meagre and scanty store to other nations, greedy to participate in profits which we exclusively derive from it at present?

From what causes, it may be asked, does this decrease arise? From many obvious ones; within these few years last past, large tracts of country have been inclosed, over which the sheep were before used to stray at large, and in that wider range of pasture, the animal, from its habit of life, acquired that quality of fleece which is called the short wool, peculiarly fitted for our best fabrics. Whereas in the richer and more luxuriant pastures, which inclosed and improved lands usually afford, every body acquainted with the subject knows, that a longer and much less useful quality of fleece is produced, wholly inapplicable to the texture and
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formation of finer cloths. The immediate tendency, and actual effect of all these inclosures, is to produce an animal bearing a fleece of what is called the longer sort of wool, such as the sheep in the county of Lincoln are particularly noted for, and which, as I before said, is not fit for the finer fabrics, but only for those of a coarser and less valuable texture. The quantity of fine wool is in consequence of these inclosures hourly diminishing; and from the provisions adopted in most Inclosure Bills, the mischief is enhanced: for it is provided in most of them, that a certain large proportion of the land inclosed should be devoted to arable purposes, which of course diminishes the quantity of what was before occupied wholly as pasture, besides the very melioration of the soil itself diminishes in the way I have already stated the quantity of finer wool. If it be said, are you arguing against the policy of Inclosures, and of making such regulations respecting them as have a tendency to produce a more ample supply of corn for the sustentation of the community? certainly I am not. We do not desire that an article of such primary necessity as bread corn, that the immediate aliment of the country should be diminished in favour of any branch of commerce, how valuable soever, for all commerce
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must be subordinate in point of importance to the vital support of the inhabitants of the country. We only state such to be the consequence of Inclosures, and of the diminished quantity of pasture land, and that the total quantity of wool produced in this country is materially decreased by this circumstance. The whole soil of the country is in effect divided into pasture and corn land. If from an increased population you are obliged to appropriate more land to the growth of corn, you of course have less left to be employed as pasture; and if besides this you make the very pasture land which remains more fertile and productive than before, you make it nearly in the same proportion less favourable to the growth of fine wool. Nor is the quantity of wool grown very easily capable of increase; no man will breed sheep for the sake of their wool. The fleece constitutes but a seventh or eighth part of the total value of the animal. It is upon the carcase that its value principally depends; and therefore the farmer will not breed more sheep than he can find a demand for by sale of the carcase. The profit to be gained from the sale of the carcase, therefore must necessarily limit and regulate the quantity of sheep that will be fed throughout the whole of the country, and
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from the increase of corn land. Amongst other causes there has been a decrease in the growth of fine wool, which has been materially felt for four or five years past; and there is at present such a degree of actual scarcity in this article, that the manufacturer, who at the same season of the year could have found a stock in hand for several months to come, finds, upon applications made at the usual places of supply, a total dearth and destitution of the article, and an incapacity of procuring a supply of so small a quantity comparatively as seventy packs of a particular species of wool;—all the traders in this great capital not being able to furnish the comparatively minute demand that I have stated. There exists then an actual dearth of this article. It is no answer that the increasing demand from an increased population, or a more extended foreign trade, makes more to be required now than formerly. If it does so, why in God's name do we not confine to our own use exclusively all that we have. By communicating the raw material to other nations, we can get but one miserable solitary grasp of profit in the outright sale of it; but by keeping it at home, and manufacturing it in the various processes it undergoes, and by employing upon it the various hands through which it passes, the State re-

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ceives an increase of advantage in almost an hundred fold proportion.

But it is said, what danger is there that this country will be dispossessed of this commerce, supposing the proposed resolution to be carried into effect? are we not, it is said, secured by what is certainly an important circumstance, the prime-occupancy and almost entire possession of the trade? are we not insured in the enjoyment of it by the possession of capital which no other nation has equal to our own. Are we not secured in it by the possession of an art and skill in the manufacture itself, and by a knowledge and facility in the various processes of which it consists, which is not yet communicated, and which some may say is incommunicable in an equal degree to other nations.

Let us not upon this latter subject deceive ourselves. At the time when the woollen manufactures were established in this country, in the reign of queen Elizabeth, the manufacturers and the manufacture were necessarily imported together at that time, it was purely a manual art, when the artisans of Flanders and Brabant, flying from the impolitic persecutions of the house of Austria, under the duke of Alva, took refuge in this country; they brought their art with them, and hands already
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trained to the art communicated the practical use and knowledge of it to others. It was only then to be acquired by a long and laborious practice of it as a merely manual art; but now it is become a manufacture, in which manual skill has a comparatively small effect and concern; a few hands can now do all that belongs to skill, of the operation the rest is become matter of mere mechanical labour, and the greatest part of the persons engaged about the work are merely employed to watch and superintend, and occasionally to direct the action of the machine, and are thus rather attendants upon the machine, and subordinate to it, than the great efficient instruments and causes of the labour itself. This is an alteration which the highly improved state of machinery in this country has produced; and I am sure I am speaking within limits when I state that the diminution of hands employed is at least in the proportion of three persons out of four, within the short period of little more than twenty years; is not this art more easily transferable from place to place than it was formerly? If there be sufficient inducement held forth to prevail upon a few principal manufacturers to go to Ireland, or to any other part of the world, where is the difficulty of transporting

the art itself? all the machinery that is now used at Leeds, or Huddersfield, or in any other neighbourhood where the manufacture is carried on in the largest extent, may be had at the same cost which is paid for it there—nay the new adventurer cannot only have all the machinery that is at present used in these places, but even more than it has been considered safe to introduce into common use, in a country already stocked with manufacturers: for there are other machines besides what are in general use, that are capable of being applied to the manufacture, in some of its processes, which would still further abridge the use of manual labour, but from the unpopularity attending the introduction of them, they have not been yet ventured upon in some countries, where the manufactures are carried on in their most considerable extent: they would export therefore the manufacture into Ireland with every advantage, and to what sort of country is it to be transported? Is it to a country dissimilar to this in the produce of materials for the manufacture, and in the conveniencies for carrying it on? Good God! it is a country equally fit from climate and other circumstances to be the seat of this very manufacture, and in some respects
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infinitely more favorable and alluring to the projects of adventure and speculation.

The manufacturer in Ireland is not obliged, as a person setting up his trade in Wiltshire, or Gloucestershire would be, to buy that which is the subject of considerable price in the outset; that which has been transmitted from father and son as a valuable inheritance, as for instance, the site upon which mills are erected, the use of streams and water-courses, and other matters subsidiary to the manufacture. Instead of having to buy them as they must be bought in the settled parts of a country, where manufactures have been long domiciled, the commercial adventurer has the field open to him at no expence whatever, or comparatively none. Has that country equal advantages in respect of water? I am instructed that it has at least equal advantage in streams to supply mills and to put manufacture in motion in all its processes. It is said, perhaps, they have not coals equally cheap as with us, but coals are principally useful only in performing those operations which may be performed by water, where there is a sufficient supply of it. The great consumption of coals which we have heard of, is occasioned by the use of fire engines, where the manufacturers have not adequate supplies of water to work

their mills, and put the machinery in motion : therefore if even coals were more wanted in Ireland than they are, and which I will shew your Lordships, is not in any great degree the case, they will suffer no substantial inconvenience, because there is a supply of water, which dispenses with the occasion for them. But supposing they were under that inconvenience in respect to their mills, what is really the difference in the price of coals to a person importing them from Liverpool, who resides at Dublin or Newry, from the expense in the same article of a manufacturer residing in the neighbourhood of Saddleworth. The freight of coals from Liverpool to Dublin or Newry, is five shillings per ton : the price of coals fluctuates from seven shillings and sixpence to ten shillings ; add the price of the freight to that, and it makes the price of coals, when transported to the ports of Ireland, from twelve shillings and sixpence to fifteen shillings per ton. What is the price of that article in the most manufacturing and increasing parts of Yorkshire ?—at Saddleworth it is from fourteen to fifteen shillings : therefore the difference is not an article upon which any stress can be laid, when compared and contrasted with the other great preponderating advantages which belong to Ireland, and which I will

will take the liberty of stating to your Lordships. What then are the peculiar advantages of Ireland on this subject? In the first place, the wages to be paid to their men are not half the amount of those in England; the manufacturers in Ireland, from their more frugal habits of living, being accustomed to much humbler and coarser fare than our manufacturers require. In the price of labour, therefore, which is the great constituent article of expence in the prosecution of every manufacture, Ireland has an infinite advantage over us, and there is not one other article, excepting the solitary article of coals, upon which I have observed already, and in which there is at the most the difference of two or three shillings in the ton against them,—there is not, I say, one article, in which Ireland has not the advantage, in point of cheapness, over Saddleworth and many other parts of Yorkshire, where this manufacture is carried on to the greatest extent.

In Ireland every article of immediate subsistence and food is infinitely cheaper than with us. Providence has given them the finest streams and falls of water in the world, in aid of machinery; and this latter advantage may be had at a price next to nothing, for these matters are not yet occupied and appreciated as they are

with us, where the purchase of them requires a large original capital in the hands of the manufacturer. They may be occupied at present in Ireland by any first comer who may choose to fix his staff there. Every article of consumption connected with the manufacture, may be had there for nothing, compared with what the same article costs here: consider too the magnitude of our taxes, as compared with those of Ireland. They are to pay for fifteen years, two parts out of seventeen of the aggregate amount of our common taxation, whilst Great Britain is to bear the other fifteen seventeenth parts. Does that constitute no difference? Let us estimate the average contribution to the total amount of taxes paid by an individual in the one country, and the other for this purpose; let us suppose Great Britain to consist of a population of ten millions, and Ireland of four millions, and let us assume for the purpose of this estimate, the total permanent taxes to be according to an account laid upon the table of another house, on the 5th of January last, that is to say, those of Great Britain, 26,349,000*l.* and a fraction, and those of Ireland, 1,860,000*l.* and a fraction, the relative proportion of contribution, *per capita*, between man and man, in each country, in England is £2 3*s.* 4*d.* per head,

head, in Ireland only 9s. 4d.—Does not this make a decisive difference? and will not this advantage carry away all our manufactures before it?—Does not this difference of taxation alone infinitely counterbalance all others, if even there existed such on the part of England. It is not to be named with the paltry difference of two or three shillings in the price of a ton of coals, particularly too as coals are not necessary to be used for any act in the direct process of the manufacture, nor in any matter subsidiary thereto, where there exists a sufficient supply of water, as there does very generally in Ireland.

Is it then to be treated as an idle jealousy, as a vain apprehension, that this trade may transfer itself to Ireland, and are we to be duped into a persuasion, that the mere actual possession of this trade, in the extent to which we now carry it on, is a circumstance sufficient to rivet and fix our dominion over it for ever; to lash it, and fasten it, to the shores of Great Britain, without risk or hazard of change or removal? We are ignorant, if we so argue, of what is actually taking place in Ireland at this moment. Ireland is in possession, beneficially in possession to an immense extent, of this very manufacture; and it is only in consequence of what has been
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understood to be the settled and arranged policy of the two countries (not indeed in consequence of regulations formally made, or of faith solemnly pledged between the two parties, but which however, by tacit understanding, has had the effect of a compact between them, in consideration of this country having conferred upon Ireland the benefits it has liberally and abundantly communicated to it, in the article of linens) that Ireland should not be, and it accordingly has not been a competitor with Great Britain, from the time of king William, in the exportation of woollens, and England has alone exported what produces annually a return of eight millions and a half to foreign countries. What is consumed in our own country, being in proportion of five to four to this export, amounts to about eleven or twelve millions more. Ireland however is in possession of the woollen manufacture for the purposes of its own consumption, and that fostered and encouraged in a particular manner by its own legislature. Every article of woollen with which the whole military service of Ireland is clothed is of their own manufacture, and is so required to be by acts of their legislature. They are in possession of this manufacture; they are in possession of it usefully and beneficially, and can carry it on to
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any extent which the terms between the two nations may admit of, which extent is indefinite under the proposed articles. The linens exported from Ireland into this country amount annually to the sum of £2,364,096 sterling, and there being a duty upon German linens, their only competitors in the market, to that amount, operates directly as a bounty on the importation of the same article from Ireland.

I know in another place, in another kingdom, it has been said, by persons in high authority there, that this was not strictly a compact, but it is not denied that it might be so in the understanding of the two nations: that they may have formed their respective financial arrangements accordingly.—But the Irish are told that the bounty on the exportation of their linens should be continued to them, and that they should have an unlimited share in the woollen manufactures, with the advantage of importing the raw material from Great Britain, besides the advantage of protecting duty. Is there any thing of equality in this, that they shall have both the *quid* and the *pro quo*, both the purchase-money and the estate; that they shall have this bounty upon their linens, the consideration for the cession of any interest in the woollens, and an equal share in the woollen trade

trade into the bargain? It does not seem to the British woollen manufacturer, representing his share in the British interests at your Lordships bar, that this is any thing like a fair partition between the Sister Kingdom in this particular, but that the youngest sister seems to have outwitted her elder in the division of their common funds. This seems not to be very fair dealing towards Great Britain; but I am not stating it as a matter of general complaint, or any otherwise than as it bears upon the woollen trade, and shews that the Irish have the advantage of so much commerce, in effect exclusively their own; as well as the advantage of protecting duties in respect to that in which they are considered as merely joint sharers with us. In what respect then, and upon what principle can the trade be said to be carried on upon an equal footing by Great Britain and Ireland, in the article of woollens?

I shall be told that the expence of exporting wool from England to Ireland will be great, and that this circumstance will operate to the disadvantage of the Irish manufacturer in favor of the English. How is that fact at present? The Irishman who may buy wool in Devonshire or Cornwall, and export it in a direct course upon a single wind, as he may to Cork
or

or any of the southern parts of Ireland, will have an advantage over an English merchant residing at Leeds or other parts of Yorkshire, of 25 per cent. in the conveyance of this article to the place of its manufacture. Wool is, I understand, generally conveyed to Leeds from London by land, in order to avoid the inconvenience of a more circuitous conveyance by water, and the differences to the prejudice of the English manufacturer arising from this circumstance alone, will be at least 25 per cent. in the article of freight.

It may be said, I have chosen an extreme point of the coast, taking a case of extreme disadvantage to the Yorkshire manufacturer. I will take it nearer, I will take Hampshire or Suffex; there it will be a disadvantage of twenty shillings and nine-pence to the English manufacturer, as compared with the situation of the Irish manufacturer in respect of the same article. But I have been considering only the freights from the country where wool is grown, to places where it is to be worked up and manufactured. I will now consider the freights from Ireland to the places where this manufacture, when made up, is to be vended.—From the advantageous situation for foreign commerce of the south-east part of Ireland, the freights are
less

less in the proportion of 20 per cent. or near 25 per cent. than they would be from most parts of Great Britain.—Then it is not a chance whether Ireland will hereafter have the manufacture.—Ireland has it the moment it is civilized—Ireland has it the moment it has protecting laws—Ireland has it, because I trust there will then be an equal degree of security in both countries for the enjoyment of civil rights and private property. It will acquire by the mere effect of superior cheapness of living, by the mere circumstance of an equal administration of the laws, by mere security of possession to property, abundant advantages in the cultivation and prosecution of this manufacture over what Great Britain now possesses or can acquire at any future period.

But it is said still, there is something behind which will disable Ireland from materially affecting the British interests in the woollen manufacture; that until capital is taught to flow in that channel, until people have habitually connected themselves with that commerce, until you can raise up such established houses in Ireland, as constitute the great strength and consequence of the commercial world in this country, nothing will be done that can materially endanger the superiority of Great Britain.—Is that

that so? Is this a country so destitute of spirit, of adventure, as not to furnish abundance of persons willing to transfer their capital into other channels, when they can do so with reasonable safety and with reasonable prospect of advantage? When the return of peace shall, by the increased value of funded property, have occasioned a redundancy of monied capital beyond what can be conveniently occupied in mortgages or ordinary loans, or what can find a vent for itself in the purchase of land, the excess must be thrown into the channel of commerce, as its natural and obvious discharge. If the channels of commerce in this country are completely filled, they will discharge their superabundance into those of the Sister Kingdom.—The want of capital then will not upon the return of peace and the establishment of order and good government in that country be a complaint of long duration. Whilst we have the means of working up our own native materials in our own manufactures, the policy of doing which was never doubted, I believe, till very lately by any person competent to consider the true system of the commercial economy and interests of this country. And the learned writer upon that subject, whose name I have alluded to already, Doctor Campbell, speaking of the
policy

policy of this country as to wool, says,* “ If one may be allowed to speak freely on so delicate and so important a point, the case seems to be this—The British dominions, in proportion to their extent, produce more wool than the rest of Europe. We endeavour, and wisely, to avail ourselves of this advantage, “ By keeping it at home (as much as in us lies) we keep the material low, while the rest of Europe being, in comparison with us, in a state of want, give an higher price for our wool than it will fetch at home, and this in spite of all our penal statutes ; they by this advanced price obtain, and it is to be feared they will always obtain it, till by an augmentation of our inhabitants, and the extension of our commerce, we ourselves are enabled to work it all, which ought therefore to be the constant and assiduous object of our councils and our endeavours.”

What this Author, who wrote about twenty years ago, or rather published then, what he had meditated and written long before—for it was the digested compilation and labour of a long life ; what he looked forward to in the spirit of patriotic prophecy, is now fully accomplished—that state of commercial prosperity in

* In note, p. 161. of his work.

which

which we are able to work up, with our own looms, every particle of our own native wool has now arrived.

Quod optanti divum promittere nemo auderet,volvenda dies en attulit ultro,—and yet, my Lords, in this situation of blessed pre-eminence above the nations around us, standing as we do upon this pinnacle of commercial prosperity, it seems to be the dangerous policy of the present hour to precipitate ourselves from it, and to destroy at once all the advantages, which it has been the wisdom of our ancestors, through a long course of ages, to procure for us, by resolutely retaining the sole and exclusive manufacture of this native and most important article of British commerce.

My Lords, I will not trespass much more at length upon your time. It has been my duty to lay before your Lordships the principles upon which the Petitioners contend, that the allowance of an indefinite exportation to Ireland of the raw material will be destructive of their great commercial interests: interests undertaken and committed upon the expected continuance of that system, which it has been the policy of our ancestors for so many generations, to adopt and continue;—upon a faith pledged to them by the distinct and expressive language of

many acts of parliament. For disapproving, as they do, of the extreme rigour which belongs to the penalties of some of our early laws; they construe them nevertheless as strongly though coarsely expressive of the clear sense which our ancestors entertained of the well-weighed policy of continuing exclusively to Great Britain the benefits of this manufacture. They do not wish to re-enact or enforce the several penalties of past times, but they wish that a policy which stands sanctioned and approved by the wisdom of antecedent ages, and has continued to the present hour, should not be hastily superseded.

What effect such an alteration would have upon the country at large, is beyond all limit in point of calculation to pronounce. The sudden and capricious transfer of commercial advantage, from one hand to another, is on all occasions mischievous: it is what all prudent statesmen would avoid: it occasions infinite confusion, misery, and derangement, in civil, social, and domestic life. The sudden influx of wealth upon those who have not tasted it before, injures and corrupts the persons who are the objects of that sudden influx; and it is ruinous in its effects to the individuals and to the country deprived of that commerce which was before its proper maintenance and support.

When

When the manufacture of wool first took its residence in this country, it seated itself immediately opposite to those provinces, from whence the woollen trade had been before removed. I mean in the counties of Essex and Suffolk, where it has continued till the present time, but has of late lingered there in a state of decay. You will have it in evidence that the effect of that decay has been to enhance the poor-rates in those districts, the seat of the ancient settlement of this manufacture, to an enormous amount: indeed such as I am almost afraid to state, though I believe I shall prove it. I am instructed, that the poor-rates have encreased in the parish of Bocking in Essex, where this manufacture formerly flourished, from eight shillings in the pound to the enormous sum of 24s. 6d. in the pound upon the rentals within five years last past; and in the parish of Lavenham in Suffolk, and some adjoining parishes, it has encreased to the amount of 32s. in the pound.—This is the immediate and unquestionable consequence of the subtraction of the manufacture from these places. The consequence will and must be the same, but in a still larger and more pernicious extent, when the great populous districts of the country which have been paid and fed by this manufacture,

shall have substracted from them the materials of their industry and the sources of their support; when there shall be withdrawn, for instance, from that part of the county of York, which is now enriched by the industry of a thriving and populous tenantry, those manufactures from which all the riches and all the population I have mentioned is derived. Supposing such a decline of the woollen manufactures in this country, as I have been considering, to take place, the manufacturer will either follow the manufacture to happier climes, or he will stay here. If he follows it, he is lost to the community and public relations of this country with which he was before connected: if he stays here, he remains to taste the bitterness of desponding poverty, and to become burthensome to the neighbourhood in which he lived, for want of any adequate means of maintenance. The country itself will be again reduced to its original state of wilderness and waste, from which, in many parts, it was recently reclaimed, by the introduction of these very manufactures; when the streams which before had wasted and scattered themselves in unprofitable abundance, were first collected and drawn together to give motion, activity, and effect to millions of wheels, and thus collaterally employing a multitude of
hands

hands of all ages and descriptions in the conduct and furtherance of these manufactures. It is by the aid of, and in connection with this valuable and multiplied machinery, that youth anticipates the period of its own usefulness, and age prolongs it.

The same cause which has added abundance and opulence to the manufacturer, has equally tended to enrich the land-owners, by raising the rents of their lands in every district, connected with the supply of those articles which the manufacturers consume. These will now be thrown back again into a state of comparative poverty and wretchedness; and thus the whole fabric upon which the prosperity of the commercial, and the advantages of the landed interest have rested for so many years, will be at once annihilated and destroyed.

My Lords, before we incur the risk of having these mischiefs entailed upon us to the latest generations, your Lordships, in this untried matter,—this great subject upon which you are now to meditate and resolve, for the first and the last time, will think, no doubt, with that degree of mature deliberation and reflection which befits the crisis in which we are placed, and the importance of that decision which you are about to form.

I know it may be said, that much of this expectation of mischief is visionary; and

that since the Union with Scotland, although it has been open to that kingdom, to push these manufactures to any indefinite extent; yet it has not done so, and that the conduct of Ireland will probably be the same.

Now, my Lords, without adverting to the situation of Scotland, which was for a long time torn with local distractions and disturbances which rendered it wholly unfit to receive and promote any great scheme of commercial improvement, I am instructed that its climate is not equally favourable to the several processes of this manufacture,—not equally favourable to the growth of wool itself,—and that it has only of late turned its attention in any degree to the cultivation of manufactures. It was first occupied in the manufacture of callicoes, which it carries on to a considerable extent at Paisley and Glasgow. Whether it will, from the example of Ireland, hereafter exert itself in the prosecution of this branch of manufactures, is another consideration. I have only hinted at certain causes which may have obstructed its efforts at improvement, but which may not apply equally to other countries.

Is not this, it is said, a narrow, jealous, and selfish policy?—is not Ireland shortly to be considered as a part of one and the same kingdom, and placed for all political purposes in the same situation

situation with ourselves? I would in answer to this question ask, in return, are there, between one county and another in England, protecting duties to give a preference and advantage in sale to the goods of one county over those of another?—do there exist any inequalities in the aggregate amount of individual taxation in these different counties of Great Britain?—no, each person bears his fair *aliquot* part of the common burthen of the entire taxation of his country.—But is that the case of Ireland? They bear as an *aliquot* part of the whole two-17ths, whilst we are to pay the other, that is fifteen-17ths; and this proportion, your Lordships observe, is to last peremptorily for twenty years. And it is the necessary consequence, as we conceive, to be drawn from the premises we have submitted, that, supposing these manufactures should be transferred beneficially to Ireland, as we firmly believe they will during that period of time; that England will be deprived of the means of affording its contribution, to the extent of its assessed proportion of fifteen-17ths of the whole burthen of taxes, when Ireland shall have acquired to itself all the most beneficial sources of comparative ability by the transfer of this very manufacture? The proportion will then become glaringly unequal. From the moment that the manufacture is laid open to the

speculations of Irish adventure, and to the prosecution of this branch of commerce, without restraint, the inequality in this article is begun. And with this inequality, under the established *ratio* of national contribution, we are to be fixed for twenty years to come. In this manner, therefore, will the country at large be affected as to its finance in the proposed scale of its contribution, whilst the manufacturer, who has under the faith of the Legislature, pledged by repeated Acts of Parliament, and a long uniform system of national policy, invested a large capital in this trade, and which is convertible, beneficially to no other purpose, will groan under the loss and privation of his former sources of subsistence, without the means of converting his former stock and materials of trade to any other purpose. For when you withdraw the trade itself, all the mills, works, and machinery belonging to them, instantly become nothing but so much useless wood and iron, and resolve themselves in effect into their original elementary parts. They are no longer valuable as machines. The whole property dissolves the moment the manufacture is subtracted from it. And what, my Lords, is the size and magnitude of that property upon which the proposed measure is to have this operation? The property computed to be engaged in this trade is one
third

third of the total value of the goods made in the course of a year, and assuming that to be 18,600,000*l.* the total of that capital may be fairly estimated at six millions sterling. Six millions thus embarked upon the faith of these Acts of Parliament, and the continued policy of the Legislature for the last two or three hundred years, will become lost to the present proprietors; and the persons who are to take their place in the prosecution of this manufacture, will sit light and easy under the comparative weight of their relative national burthens, and respective proportions of taxation, and without the expence we are at in purchasing mills, situations for manufactures, water-courses, and the like: all which are matters of high price, and sometimes not to be obtained in this country at any price whatsoever.

Under these circumstances, and considering the infinite disadvantages under which the British manufacturer, to whom the wisdom and policy of the nation has for so many years appropriated the sole manufacture of British wool will labour, we trust your Lordships will not make an alteration, which if made, and if, as we are assured it must be unfortunately, made, is also incapable of revival or correction. Whatever your Lordships shall adopt to-day, is adopted for ever: nothing will be left, in case
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the experiment is unsuccessful, but unavailing sorrow and regret for having made it. The petitioners therefore do apply to your Lordships in an especial manner, as the guardians of the stability of the constitution and policy of the country, as that which your Lordships have often been in periods of dangerous innovation, the *statores hujus urbis atque imperii*.—To avert this threatened evil, your Lordships have often heretofore, in times of trouble and commotion, by your permanent situation in the legislature, and by the stability of your councils, afforded a timely check to many dangerous changes and innovations that may have been from time to time meditated, and which, but for your Lordships resistance, would have been effectuated. We implore the protection of the same benignant and fatherly assistance against the same species of innovation meditated at this moment, and threatening to strike so deeply as it must at the root of our most important national commerce, and involving in its destruction not the interest, as has been represented of a few interested manufacturers only, but the interest of almost every class and description of society, comprehending not only every artisan and dealer connected collaterally with that manufacturer, but the farmer, the owner of land, in short,
every

every person in any degree interested in the permanent benefits derived from the produce, commerce, and active industry of his country. We implore your Lordships to consider the object of these ancient and long subsisting acts of parliament, and to give effect to their policy. Your Lordships know these acts were not unadvisedly made; that it was not rashly that your ancestors resolved upon this system of exclusively protecting and encouraging the woollen manufacturers of your own country, and of exporting them to other countries, enhanced in price by the labour and taxes of this country, and bringing back in return to the coffers of this country, the amount of that labour and of those taxes, to be again thrown into active circulation, and to become again the source of renewed commerce and of repeated taxation. They apply to your Lordships to redeem them from this threatened calamity, imploring your Lordships not only to abstain yourselves, but to avert others from courses leading to that dangerous system of change, which, if it does take place, will involve them, their families, the districts, and communities of which they form a part, in short, every description of British manufacturer and artisan, and the most important British interests, in one common ruin. Your Lordships ancestors not only have in our
statute

statute books and records raised up memorials to remind you of their ancient and well approved policy ; but your Lordships' House, in order to remind you still further of this, the cardinal policy of the realm (as with a view to other subjects) they in like manner remind you of the naval atchievements of your ancestors, and point out by animated representations and images, what is the true constitutional strength and defensive protection of your country, by arraying the walls of this House with the triumphs of your ancestors, with the heroic naval victories and exploits of those who have gone before you in the paths of glory. I say, my Lords, with the same view, and subservient to similar purposes of policy, in addition to the memorials recorded in your statutes, your Lordships ancestors have exhibited a kind of sensible symbol and token of perpetual admonition to your Lordships House, drawn and formed from this great staple article of our national commerce; by making it the seat of judgment itself, upon which the learned sages of the law, within this House itself, in this last most solemn resort of national justice, are arrayed and drawn together.

By all these sacred memorials, by the ancient and hallowed statutes of your realm, by
every

every thing which your ancestors, who have gone before you in the charge of this high legislative trust, have endeavoured to impress upon the minds of those who should follow them, as most sacred and obligatory; we implore your Lordships to protect and rescue us, from the effects of a measure which will involve irretrievably and without power of change this country itself, through the destruction of its most important manufacturing interests, in one entire and absolute ruin!—It is not upon vain conjecture,—it is not from presumptions and apprehensions which fall upon and occupy light minds, incapable of forming sound and rational judgments on subjects of this grave importance, that they appeal to your Lordships,—but it is upon such grounds as they conceive ought to decide the judgment of all reasonable persons, that they deprecate the passing of this resolution into a law, which when passed will be incapable under any sense of actual and experienced inconvenience, or upon any prospect of further and still more urgent calamity, of change or modification, so long as the nation itself shall hold its name and place among the kingdoms of the world. :

MINUTES

No. V.

MINUTES OF EVIDENCE
BEFORE THE HOUSE OF LORDS,
RELATING TO THE
WOOLLEN MANUFACTORY.

Ordered to be printed 1st May, 1800.

Die Jovis, 1 Maii, 1800.

THE Order of the Day being read for the House to resolve itself into a Committee of the whole House, to take into further consideration his Majesty's most gracious message, together with the address of the two houses of parliament of Ireland, and the resolutions of the said two houses, touching a Union with Great Britain;

And for the Lords to be summoned; and for the several petitioners concerned in the Woollen Manufactory to be heard by their counsel against the Sixth resolution:

The

The House resolved itself into a Committee of the whole House accordingly,

Lord *Walsingham* in the Chair,

The Counsel were called in.

And Mr. *Law* and Mr. *Plumer* appearing as counsel for the petitioners, Mr. *Law* was heard on their behalf.

Then Mr. *William Hustler* was called in; and having been sworn, was examined as follows:

Where do you live, and what is your business?—I live at Bradford in Yorkshire; my business is that of a Wool-Stapler.

How long have you been engaged in that business?—About sixteen years.

Was your father engaged in the same business, and for how long?—My father was engaged in the same business about sixty years.

Had you the advantage of access to your father's papers, and the observations he had made upon this subject?—I had.

During the period of your own prosecution of the business, have you been accustomed to purchase wool in this kingdom?—I have.

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Be so good as state in what counties you have bought wool?—I have bought wool——

(The witness appearing to speak from a paper, was asked),

What is the paper you have in your hand?—It is an account in my own hand writing of the counties in which I have bought wool; I have bought wool in the counties of Durham, Yorkshire, Lincolnshire, Leicestershire, Rutland, Nottingham, Warwick, Northampton, Huntingdon, Cambridge, Stafford, Norfolk, Hertford, Middlesex, Surry, Berkshire, Bedford, Buckingham, and Hampshire; and by my partner and agents, in Worcestershire, Essex, Northumberland, Kent, Suffex, Suffolk, Wiltshire, Dorsetshire, Oxfordshire, Shropshire, Herefordshire, in South Wales, and Scotland, besides one or two other counties which I cannot speak so positively to.

Have the purchases made by you in these counties been every year, or only occasionally at different periods during the sixteen years you have spoken of?—Occasionally; I have not bought in each county every year.

Are you well acquainted at this time with the quantity of wool produced in the country?—It is impossible for me to state the exact quantity

quantity of wool grown in this kingdom; I know of no register, nor any documents from which I can collect it with certainty; but I have seen calculations made by my father, who was long in business, and several others made by gentlemen in different parts of the kingdom, which stated that some years ago, in the years 1782, and I think in 1788 and 1791, the quantity was then estimated at six hundred thousand packs; these accounts, I believe, have been received as being made with correctness; and from the knowledge I now have of the growth of wool in this kingdom, I have no reason to believe that the alteration is great; therefore I calculate the quantity now in the kingdom as being the same, or nearly the same as formerly.

Is that the result of your own personal observations and experience in the business during the whole time that you have been acquainted with it?—From comparing the quantities of wool grown upon many farms in different parts of the kingdom, with the quantities now grown on the same farms, I make my calculation, that the quantity is not much altered.

Is it your opinion that the quantity has increased or decreased of late?—I said before, that I conceive the quantity was not materially
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altered.

altered. I know many instances of its being decreased by inclosures, and by the introduction of a new breed of sheep; in Warwickshire, in Lincolnshire, in Leicestershire, and other parts of the kingdom.

Explain in what way inclosures have the effect of lessening the growth of wool?—Land in a waste state is generally pastured by sheep, and nearly, I think, by sheep alone; when enclosed, the greatest part is generally ploughed up, in which state it no longer furnishes pasture for sheep.

Have you observed what the effect is of encroaching the fertility of the soil upon wool?—I think it invariably renders the wool heavier and of less value.

When you speak of the number of packs, what number of pounds of wool do you compute in a pack?—Two hundred and forty pounds in a pack.

Do you know, of your own knowledge, what is the average price of a pack of wool at this time?—I estimate the average value now to be eleven pounds ten shillings.

What was the average price of a pack of wool in 1779, and from that time downwards?—It appears, from my father's books, that the price in 1779 was about five pounds per pack.

Did

Did you make those extracts yourself from your father's books?—Yes. From that time to 1791, I have not made any extract. In 1791, the average price, as near as I could estimate it, was nine pounds: in 1792 eleven pounds; in 1793, from seven pounds to eight pounds: in 1794, from eight pounds to eight pounds ten shillings: in 1795, nine pounds: in 1796, from nine pounds to nine pounds ten shillings: in 1797, nine pounds: in 1798 from nine pounds to nine pounds ten shillings: in 1799 eleven pounds, and at present eleven pounds ten shillings, as I before stated.

From the knowledge you have yourself of this commodity, state to the house, whether there is a sufficient supply for the demand?—I believe the supply is insufficient.

Have you, in the course of your own experience, found that to be the case?—I have, in many instances found that that is now the case.

In what respect?—By applications made in parts of the country where we have been accustomed to buy wool at this time of the year. I speak of the coarser wools and the long wools: the supply of fine wool has been brought from Spain and other foreign parts.

You speak of applications made; were they by yourself, to be supplied with this species of wool?—They were.

What was the result of those applications? Did you get what quantity you wanted?—I was told there was none left in the parts where I made the application; not in every instance; but generally.

At what time did you experience that insufficiency? How long back?—Since the month of February last.

Whether in former times in the year 1782, and subsequent to that time, there used generally to be a quantity of wool on hand unfold?—I cannot speak to the quantity on hand in 1782, not being then in business. Since that time, I know, from having travelled in the business myself, that the quantity was very considerable.

How long since, and for how long did it continue to be an ample supply?—I think in the years 1783 and 1784, the quantity on hand of the long and coarser wools was estimated, as being at least three years growth. I am persuaded from my own experience, that that was not over-rated.

How has it been since that time?—The old stocks have gradually lessened until the spring of last year.

Lessened by being worked up?—Yes; I mean so.

Was it then in the spring of the last year that

that you first began to experience a difficulty in obtaining as much as you wanted?—I do not recollect ever meeting with any difficulty in buying the quantity of wool I wanted before the last and present years, excepting in the latter end of the year 1792, when the wool of the country was bought up on speculation by wool-staplers and country bankers.

Has all the quantity that was bought up in 1792, according to your own observation and experience, been worked up since that time?—I believe it is entirely wrought up; to the best of my knowledge it is.

In addition to the growth of each succeeding year, besides the stock that was then collected?—I mean so.

How long in your judgment is it that the stock now in hand will be sufficient to supply the consumption of the country, supposing the demand to continue to be the same as it has been for some time past?—I am afraid there is scarcely sufficient of many kinds of wool to supply the demand till next July, the usual time of sheep-shearing.

At this period of the year in former times, what quantity used there to be, and for how long a time was the quantity in hand equal to the supply required?—In former years, when I first began business, the quantity was so large,

as I stated before, as to be sufficient to supply the whole trade of the country for one or two years, according to the best of my recollection and knowledge.

Subsequent to that time, in general at this period of the year, about the spring of the year, what quantity used there to be on hand sufficient to carry on the trade, and for how long a time?—The stocks, as I have said before, have gradually decreased; but in the years 1796 and 1795, I think there was at least sufficient in the spring to supply the manufactories six months after the usual time of sheep-shearing.

Do you mean to state then that there is *not* at this time so much by six months consumption as there used to be upon hand?—That is my meaning.

Are you acquainted with any method by which the growth of wool in this country can be increased?—I know of none, but what would tend to lessen the means of supplying the people with corn; such as converting the arable land into sheep pasture, or substituting sheep for horned cattle or horses.

Supposing the larger breed of sheep to be encouraged for the sake of the carcase, and for the greater quantity of meat being produced, what effect would that have with respect to the produce of wool?—If an equal number of larger
sheep

sheep could be kept in the same pasture, the quantity of wool would be increased. I cannot say from my own knowledge, whether the farmer can keep an equal number upon the same pasture of the large sheep as of the smaller.

In that event of a greater quantity produced by a larger animal, of what quality would the produce be; would it be better or worse than that produced by one of a smaller size?—Generally worse: there are some small sheep, such as are bred in Scotland and Cumberland, which produce coarse wool.

The increase then in the quality of wool, by encouraging a larger breed of sheep, would be to deteriorate the quality?—Certainly.

Would it lessen the quantity of short wool that is used for the purpose of clothing?—The larger sheep generally produce long combing wool.

Which is not so much used for clothing?—It is unfit, or not so fit for the purposes of making cloth as the other.

Do you know, or have you observed, whether if the pasture upon which the sheep feed becomes better, the wool becomes worse?—I said before, I thought that was invariably the case.

You have stated a general calculation respect-

ing the number of packs produced in a year, and likewise the average price per pack, can you give the house any judgment how much the wool is improved by manufacture upon a general average?—My estimate makes it, that it is increased by the manufacture three times its original value.

What are the data upon which you calculate that it is trebled in its value by the manufacture?—In the manufacture of some kinds of heavy woollens, I believe it is only double; in other species of woollen manufacture, it is increased seven, eight, and I believe even nine times its original value; and I have reason to believe, that three times is not under the truth upon the average.

Upon that low estimate of the average value, what is the total sum produced by the manufacture of wool in the kingdom?—Supposing the quantity as I stated before to be six hundred thousand packs, valued at eleven pounds per pack, and that is trebled by the manufacturer, it will amount I think to nineteen millions eight hundred thousand pounds annually.

That you state to be the total value of the manufacture of what is grown in this country only, without any foreign import?—Certainly.

Besides that, is there a considerable quantity of foreign wool imported into this country for
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the purpose of manufacture?—I am not an importer of wool; but I know from seeing Spanish, Portugal, and other foreign wool, that the quantity brought into our markets is considerable.

Has not the quantity of Spanish and Portuguese wool, introduced for the purpose of manufacture into this country, considerably increased of late years?—Not being an importer, I am not so able to answer that question as some others.

From your knowledge and observation respecting the trade, and all the information you have been able to collect, state, according to the best judgment and calculation you can make, the number of persons who are employed in this manufacture?—My father's calculation of the number of people employed in this manufacture and dependant upon it, in the year 1782, was three millions. The introduction of machinery has certainly lessened that number in some degree; but I am not able to state the decrease.

From the knowledge you have of the trade itself, can you state what is the relative price of wool in Ireland, compared with wool of the same quality in this country, beginning with the year 1795?—I have had an account put into my hand by a gentleman in the Irish trade, of the prices in Ireland compared with those at Norwich.

What

What did that state the value of combing wool in Ireland to be in 1795?—The price in Ireland was stated to me to be eleven-pence in 1795, and eight-pence farthing at Norwich; wool of the like quality, in 1796, fourteen-pence farthing in Ireland, Ten-pence at Norwich: in 1797, nine-pence three farthings in Ireland, eight-pence three farthings at Norwich: in 1798, twelve-pence three farthings in Ireland, seven-pence farthing at Norwich: in 1799, fifteen-pence farthing in Ireland, eight-pence halfpenny at Norwich.

Do you, in all these instances of comparison, take wool of the same quality and of the same sort?—I do.

(*By a Lord.*) From whom had you that paper?—Mr. John Gurney at Norwich, engaged in the trade.

(*By Counsel.*) Does your own experience and knowledge of the trade confirm the truth of that statement?—I never was in Ireland, and therefore cannot speak respecting the prices of wool there, only from information. I have no doubt whatever of the veracity of the person who gave it me, and I can confirm the account of the prices of English wool from my own knowledge.

In general can you state from your own knowledge, as a person conversant with the trade,
and

and who has bought and sold a great quantity of wool, that the prices in Ireland of wool of the same quality has been higher than those of the same quality in England?—Only from the general report of people in the Irish trade.

From the knowledge that you have acquired as a person acquainted with the business?—I cannot speak from my own knowledge respecting the prices in Ireland at all.

Can you speak from your own knowledge of the comparative view of the freights in conveying wool to Ireland and to Yorkshire from the western coasts of this kingdom?—Wool has not been allowed to be exported to Ireland.

What would be the freight of conveying it if it were allowed?—Judging from the distance of the western coast, and comparing that with the distance from London to Hull, and from other parts to Hull, I think from three to four shillings a pack would be an ample freight from the western coast to the nearest ports of Ireland.

What, in point of fact, is the freight paid upon a pack of wool from Exeter to Leeds, if conveyed by land carriage by the way of London?—From Exeter to Leeds by London, if sent by land from London to Leeds, the carriage would amount to about twenty-nine shillings;

I esti-

I estimate it at twenty-nine shillings and three-pence.

Supposing it sent by sea from London?—Twenty-one shillings and three-pence.

Is it usual, in point of fact, to send wool from these ports to Leeds, sometimes by land carriage and sometimes by water conveyance?—Wool is frequently sent from those ports to Leeds, generally I believe the finer sorts by land, the lower and less valuable sorts by water from London.

What is the difference then in the price, between being sent to Ireland and being sent into Yorkshire, of wool to be sent from the same place?—Supposing the freight to Ireland to be, as I said before, four shillings, the difference would amount to twenty-five shillings and three-pence, if sent by land from London to Leeds, in favour of Ireland; and seventeen shillings and three-pence dearer to send it by water to Leeds than to Ireland.

Supposing the wool sent from Wiltshire, Dorsetshire, Suffex, and Hampshire; state the comparative price of conveyance to Ireland, compared with that of Yorkshire?—From the counties of Wilts, Dorset, Suffex, and Hampshire, I estimate the average carriage to be about ten shillings per pack to London; from
thence,

thence to Leeds, by land, fifteen shillings and nine-pence, amounting together to twenty-five shillings and nine-pence; from the coasts of Dorsetshire, Suffex, and Hampshire, to Ireland, I estimate that five shillings would be a sufficient freight, leaving twenty shillings and nine-pence in favour of Ireland, if sent by land to Leeds; twelve shillings and nine-pence if sent by water to Leeds.

In point of fact, is Yorkshire partly supplied from the different counties you have enumerated, Wiltshire, Dorsetshire, Suffex, and Hampshire?—We have large quantities every year from all those counties.

Are you supplied from those counties with the finer wool by land often, and the other wool by water?—We have the finer wool generally by land, and the heavier by water.

And you have it at the rate you have stated?
—Yes.

Whether Ireland can be supplied with wool from this country at a cheaper rate than many of the manufactures of this country obtain it, supposing the prohibition to export it to be taken off?—I have no doubt of that.

From what parts of the kingdom could it be supplied cheaper than the manufactures in this
country

country obtain it?—From the south and western coasts of Great Britain.

The difference would be in the article of convenience in the freight?—Certainly.

Is there any other article that the Irish manufacturer, supposing a woollen manufacture established in that country, could be supplied with cheaper than the woollen manufactures of this country? What, for instance, is the freight of coals!—I am myself engaged in the coal trade at Liverpool, and send coals to Ireland constantly. We have had them carried from Liverpool to Dublin and Newry at from five to six shillings per ton for the freight; we have paid more sometimes than that, but we have frequently sent them for those freights.

At the same time, what was the freight of coals sent from the same place to ports in this kingdom where the manufacture of wool was carried on, for the purpose of the manufacture?—We also send coals from Liverpool to the coast of Devonshire; the freights are, I believe, from twelve to fifteen shillings per ton at least.

Is there a manufacture of woollens in Devonshire where coals are sent to?—There is a considerable manufacture of woollens in some parts of Devonshire; but I cannot say positively whether

ther the coals we send are consumed in that part of Devonshire, though we send, I think, to all parts of the coast.

Have you any doubt, supposing the free export of wool to Ireland were allowed, what effect it would produce upon the manufacture of this country?—I conceive that a large quantity of wool would immediately be bought in the markets of this country for the use of the Irish manufacturers; the consequence of which must be, that British manufacturers would be deprived of employment.

Have you any reason to believe, that the demand for wool in this country will in future years be less than it has been experienced to be of late?—I have no reason to believe that the demand for wool will decrease.

In the event of peace do you know of any markets that might be opened for the conveyance of those articles of woollen manufacture?—Merchants concerned in the foreign trade would answer that question better than I can.

Examined by the Lords.

Have you any particular reason for choosing the year upon which you stated the price of wool?—I believe the average price of wool at that time was lower than at any other.

Witnessed

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Do you mean to say, that you believe before that it had been higher?—I believe it had.

Can you state that price?—No, I cannot; it was before I was in business; and I have not my father's papers in my pocket to refer to.

You seem to be acquainted with a great many counties. Is it to be understood in your opinion whether the effect of inclosing, taking the whole counties that you know together, is to decrease or increase arable land?—The inclosure of waste land has certainly, as far as I can judge, increased the quantity of arable land.

Taking all the counties together that you know?—I mean so.

Whether you think those sheep that are fed upon good and improved pasture land do not produce as good wool as those fed on commons, where the pasture is very scanty, and where they are obliged to scramble over bushes? Whether you do not think the land so improved produces as good a quality of sheep, and as good wool, as those commons before they were so enclosed and improved?—I think the quality is not so good; the quantity upon the same number of sheep I think will be increased.

Do you not think that improved land will produce a greater number of sheep, and consequently

frequently more wool?—If the whole of it be occupied for sheep pasture, the quantity will be increased undoubtedly.

With respect to the three particular counties, Warwick, Northampton, and Leicester, do you think in those counties the arable is increased or decreased by inclosure?—I speak of inclosure of waste land; the quantity of pasture land has certainly been increased in those counties by the inclosure of the open corn fields.

Mention any three or more counties in which you suppose there is as much land converted to arable as in those three counties has been converted to pasture?—I am not able to answer that question; I am not a sufficient judge of the quantities of land inclosed in those counties, or in other counties.

The witness was directed to withdraw.

Then Mr. CHRISTOPHER RAWDON was called in; and having been sworn, was examined as follows :

Where do you live, and are you engaged in any branch of the woollen manufacture?—I am engaged in the woollen manufacture near Halifax.

From what market for wool are you in the habit of supplying yourself?—From Wakefield market, and from the growers in Lancashire; from Halifax market, and Keighley market.

Have you lately found any difficulty in supplying yourself with wool at those markets?—More than usually so for the last half year, or since November.

Have you lately made any application for wool without effect?—I have sought wool in the markets of Wakefield and Halifax proper for my manufacture, and have not found it, though Wakefield is the principal wool mart for the county of York.

In what proportion have you found the supply less than formerly?—Since Christmas I have found not more than half the usual quantity of wool in the market.

Have you found any inconvenience in the interruption of your works from that circumstance?—At one period part of my works stood for want of wool to employ them.

At what markets did you apply in order to be supplied, and without effect?—At Wakefield, Halifax, and Keighley.

Do you know whether any other manufacture in your neighbourhood has suffered the like inconvenience?—A considerable manufacture
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in my neighbourhood stopped for several days for want of wool to employ the workmen.

Did the workmen remain out of employ for any considerable time in consequence of that want of wool?—About a week.

Did you make those workmen who so lay out of work any allowance on that account?—I gave them something, their being out of work not being their fault.

Did you, in order to obtain a supply of wool, offer any higher price for it?—I could not meet with the wool, therefore the price was out of the question.

What exertions, journeys, or inquiries did you make for the purpose of procuring wool?—I applied personally in the Wakefield, Halifax, and Keighley markets; and in Lincolnshire my agent wrote that he could scarcely find a parcel of wool to sell in a ride of forty miles.

Are you capable of forming any judgment of what will be the effect of any exportation of wool on the manufactures carried on in that part of Yorkshire where you live?—As I am firmly of opinion that there is not more than wool sufficient to employ the hands now at work till new wool comes, any diminution from that stock must just so far deprive our labourers of their work, and I know no other remedy than the parish for them.

Are you capable of forming any judgment as to the amount of the capital vested in the trade for carrying on the manufacturing business of the country?—Of that capital which is immoveable, or nearly so, I can form a tolerably correct idea; there being documents printed of the amount of the export of woollens, and that amount being between eight and nine millions; the general opinion also admitting, that the home trade is greater than the export, would make our exports amount to upwards of nineteen millions. I know from my own works, that I am not able to finish three times the cost of those works in woollens in the course of the year; therefore the utensils and machinery, and vested capital with other works upon the same plan, would amount to upwards of six millions; but as all works may not be on the same expensive scale, I take off from that sum one million, leaving I think to a certainty five millions of vested capital, the greatest part of which cannot be removed at all, and the rest not without great loss.

In forming that calculation of the vested capital; do you take at all into consideration the quantity of foreign wool that is used in the manufacture?—Not in this estimate; because there are articles of woollen manufacture I conceive exported, that are not in the account of
the

the exports, such as hosiery, that would amount to a sum probably equal to the export of fine cloths made of Spanish wool.

Are you to be understood, that in addition to the export to the amount of eight millions and a half of fine woollen cloths, there is also an export of worsteds to nearly the same amount?—I apprehend the worsteds are included in the aggregate sum of eight millions five hundred thousand pounds exported.

Whether this capital which consists of mills and machinery is capable of being transported to any other country, or whether upon the removal of the manufacture, the owners will not incur a total loss in these particulars?—The greatest part are immoveable, consisting of mills, buildings, and that kind of machinery not transportable without very great loss; I mean to say, the principal part cannot be moved, and what can be removed, would be with a very great loss indeed.

Would that which remained, and was not capable of being removed, be totally lost in point of value to the owner, or would it be capable of being applied to other purposes?—I conceive it would not be capable to be applied to other purposes; the district I occupy as a manufacturer had no buildings, and if there was no manufactory of this kind, would return

to its original state; as the soil would not support the inhabitants.

According to the best observation you have been able to form upon that subject, has there or not been any considerable decrease in the wool within these two or three years past?—If I am to answer that question as to the quantity on hand, I can certainly say that it has diminished.

Do you know whether there remains any great quantity in the hands of the wool-staplers or growers?—I cannot find it, and I have sought it diligently.

Do you believe the demand of the commerce of the country in this article to be such, that if more could be furnished, more would be capable of being worked up?—I have no doubt but more would be sold if there was wool to make it; I have returned orders because I could not meet with wool.

What do you then apprehend would be the consequence of permitting the exportation to Ireland, or elsewhere, of a quantity of the wool now usually employed in the British manufactures?—Of course, those who now work it must either find a fresh trade, or they must be impoverished.

Do you know of any other source, from which the deficiency occasioned in the wool for home

home use, could be supplied?—Not for home use.

Are you capable of forming a judgment what is the total growth of wool in a year?—Merely from general report.

Do you know the relative quantity between that which is manufactured for home use, and for foreign export?—I should conceive in the proportion of four of export to five of home trade.

Are you acquainted with the expence of freights between Yorkshire and different parts of the country, from which wool is brought into Yorkshire for the purpose of manufacturing?—I am.

What is the rate of freight, for instance, from Devonshire to Yorkshire, or to London, adding the carriage from London to Yorkshire?—Not using that kind of wool, I do not speak to a certainty; from Lincolnshire and the heavy wool countries I obtain my supply.

What are the freights from one part of Great Britain to another which you can compare with the freight to Ireland?—I do not know.

Are you acquainted with the rates of freight from any part of Ireland to any foreign European dominions?—Being in the constant habit of exporting wool of my manufacture, or nearly so,

so, to Spain and Portugal, I am enabled to say, that in some the price of freights from Hull or from Liverpool, make a difference of twenty-five per cent. in favour of Liverpool; and as Ireland is still more favourably situated for exporting to Spain and Portugal, I have no doubt but the difference would be greater than between Hull and Liverpool.

The witness was directed to withdraw.

Then Mr. THOMAS LUMB was called in; and having been sworn, was examined as follows:

What business are you engaged in, and at what place?—At Wakefield in the county of York, a wool-stapler.

For how long?—Twenty-eight years.

During that period of time, in what counties have you been accustomed to purchase wool?—Leicestershire, Northamptonshire, Berkshire, Oxfordshire, Buckinghamshire, Wiltshire, Hampshire, Suffex, Hertfordshire, Bedfordshire, Cambridgeshire, Norfolk, and Suffolk.

Have you been accustomed to make journies annually into those counties for the purpose of purchasing wool?—Four times in the year into nine, and once into four.

During how long time has that been the case?—The whole of the time.

Have

Have you perceived of late any difference in the supply of wool from those counties, whether it is increased or decreased?—A considerable decrease.

Do you confine that observation to any particular counties, or that you have generally found a considerable decrease?—In general; but not in all counties alike.

From what period can you state that you have experienced yourself that decrease?—In the last ten years.

During that period has the decrease been gradual?—Gradual.

Have you observed, whether of late, there is any considerable stock on hand not worked up?—Very little.

At this period of the year, what stock used there to be on hand when the supply was sufficient, reckoning the number of months that it would last?—I have formerly found as much wool upon hand of the growth of the year before in the month of October, as I now generally find of the last year's growth in the month of April.

Has that generally been the case in all the counties you have mentioned?—In general.

In what species of wool has this decrease been experienced by you?—Chiefly in the finer sorts.

Has

Has there been also a decrease in the combing wool, the coarser sort?—I cannot speak to that, not being in that trade.

Is the sort of wool you have been in the habit of purchasing, the finer wool for cloth?—Yes; the short fine clothing wool.

Can you state any cause to which you have yourself observed this diminution is attributable?—To the increased demand of wool in Yorkshire, since the introduction of machinery principally, and also, in some degree, from the many inclosures that have taken place.

Where recent inclosures have taken place, have you, in fact, observed that fewer sheep were produced than were formerly?—I have.

Has that been the case in any considerable degree that the quantity has been less?—I think so.

In those places where there have been inclosures was the quality better or worse?—The quality is inferior.

Were you able to procure the same quantity of fine wool which you dealt in from those counties which you used to do where there have been inclosures?—No.

Did you observe what was the effect of the difference in the feed of the animal, when a different mode of agriculture was introduced as food, such as turnips and artificial grasses?

Have

Have you observed what effect that produced upon the wool?—It tends to enlarge the growth of the wool, the length of it, and to lower the quality; it makes it longer and coarser, and not so useful in our manufactures.

You have stated, that there is at present an insufficiency to answer the purpose of the manufacture; whether according to your knowledge and judgment, which you have collected for twenty-eight years, there is any prospect of the demand being diminished?—I should apprehend not; but in case of a peace, a considerably greater demand.

If at this time a greater quantity of wool could be obtained, could the trade work it up into manufactures?—I think they might.

Are you acquainted with any method, by which the growth of wool in this country might be improved and extended as to its quantity and quality?—I know of no probable method at present.

Whether if the wool of this country is permitted to be exported to Ireland, there would or not be a sufficiency for the manufactory?—Having already scarce sufficient for our own manufactories, we certainly should feel a greater inconvenience if any part of that were taken away; for had we not last year had a

very

very large importation of Spanish wool, we should not have had fine wool sufficient to execute the orders then on hand.

You have spoken of having a considerable importation of foreign wool; what species of wool was that, and from what country?—From Spain.

Have you been accustomed to use that species of wool in your business for some years back?—I do not manufacture any wool myself, but merely purchase it to sell to others that do.

Do you use any of the Portuguese wool?—No.

Examined by the Lords.

Whether you know the price of coals at Liverpool?—I do not know.

What is the price in the manufacturing parts of Yorkshire per ton?—Coals at Wakefield are not sold by the ton but by measure; a cart load which three horses will draw, is sold for eight shillings; I should reckon it the same as a chaldron.

Can you form any estimate of what proportion of wool grown in Yorkshire is worked up in Yorkshire?—No, I cannot; there is a large quantity of wool grown in Yorkshire, but not of that kind which I generally purchase; I never did purchase any in Yorkshire.

Is the large quantity that is grown in Yorkshire consumed there?—I do not know.

Of

Of which of the counties of England is the fine wool used in the manufactories in Yorkshire?
—Suffex, Hampshire, Norfolk, and Suffolk.

By what mode of conveyance does it come?
—From Suffex and Hampshire by land to London, afterwards by water or by land at the option of the purchaser.

Do you attribute the increased price of wool at present which you have stated to the increase of manufactures?—To the increase of manufactures and the shortness of the stocks upon hand.

The witness was directed to withdraw.

Then Mr. JOHN RATCLIFFE was called in; and having been sworn, was examined as follows:

In what part of the county of York have you carried on your manufacture, and for what time?—In the parish of Saddleworth, in the West Riding of the county of York.

For what number of years?—More than fifteen years.

In what counties have you usually purchased your wool?—I have formerly purchased wool in various counties; but lately manufacturing a particular sort of wool only, it has suited my purpose better to buy from the staplers.

Of

Of the produce of what counties is that wool which you have used?—Kent and Hereford, Shropshire, Gloucestershire, Brecknockshire, and from the staplers in Yorkshire, who buy it from various counties.

Has it fallen in your way to make any observations lately concerning the number of sheep in Somersetshire?—I some years back used to travel through the county of Somerset, over Mendip Hills, which were then waste land and uninclosed, and there was a very considerable number of sheep upon them; I observed the last time I was there these commons were inclosed, and there were but a very small number of sheep in the inclosures.

Was there a quantity much fewer in comparison than you had observed formerly?—Much fewer.

Have you made any observations respecting the comparative increase or decrease of the Wool grown in Yorkshire of late years?—I can only speak as to the parish where I live; the parish where I live has much less than formerly.

Can you state the proportion in which it is less than formerly?—I cannot exactly.

Is there a greater quantity of arable land in Yorkshire and Somersetshire now than there was.

was formerly?—There is in those particular places where I have observed.

Is the quality of the wool of the sheep in those particular places improved of late years or not?—I have invariably observed, that the quality of wool has degenerated when the sheep have been taken into pasture lands from the commons.

Are you capable of suggesting any means by which the total quantity of wool grown in the country might be increased?—I cannot point out any means that occur to me so likely as turning the arable into pasture land; but that I apprehend is not likely to be done in the present situation of the country.

Have you experienced of late any greater difficulty in getting a supply of wool than formerly?—I have not; because, as I said before, I am in the habit of purchasing from the staplers, and I have always found the quantity that I wanted.

Have you formed any estimate of the value of mills, buildings, and other constituent articles of the vested property of the woollen manufactories of this kingdom?—I have made some observations on a district with which I am very well acquainted: I have estimated the value of mills, warehouses, and other buildings necessary for carrying on the works in that district, and
I found

I found the result of my estimation is that they are worth ninety-four thousand pounds. I have also estimated the value of the cloths manufactured in that district with those conveniencies, and the result of that estimation is, that they are worth two hundred and eighty-eight thousand pounds annually: therefore I conclude that the vested property of carrying on the woollen manufactories is to the annual produce as ninety-four to two hundred and eighty-eight, which is nearly one-third.

Are coals dearer or cheaper in the district immediately about Saddleworth, than in other manufacturing parts of Yorkshire?—They are dearer than they are at Leeds, Huddersfield, and Bradford; indeed I believe I may say generally, that they are dearer than in any other manufacturing town that I am acquainted with in the West Riding of the county of York.

What is the price of coals in your district near Saddleworth?—Upon the average, I take it at about fourteen or fifteen shillings per ton, the parish is rather extensive; in some places they may be higher, in some lower.

Is there any particular advantage belonging to this district for carrying on the woollen manufactories under this disadvantage in respect of coals?—It is a very hilly country which constitutes a great fall to the rivers, and that gives

us power to work our mills ; and the waters are particularly fine and good for the manufactory of woollens.

Is the steam engine much in use in your part of the country ?—I know of but one instance of a steam engine, and that is a small one.

Is the steam engine at all necessary to be used where there is a sufficient supply of water to carry on the business of the machinery without it ?—By no means, where there is a sufficient fall of water to give power to the mills.

Is that the case pretty generally at Saddleworth ?—It is,

Are there any particular processes in the woollen manufacture to which coals are necessarily useful, except for the purposes already mentioned, for which water is equally applicable ?—Some kind of coals or fuel is necessary for the dying of wool and cloth, and for drying and pressing.

Is the consumption occasioned in any of those branches of the manufacture at all equal to the consumption occasioned by the use of fire engines ?—No.

Is the quantity of coals consumed in any of those operations of the manufacture at all equal in point of quantity with the quantity consumed by fire engines ?—It bears a very small proportion indeed.

Examined by the Lords.

From whence do you bring your coals in general?—From the parish of Oldham in Lancashire.

What is the distance from Saddleworth to the pit?—The pit from whence I am supplied is about a mile or a mile and a half from my house.

Are there many pits within that neighbourhood?—There are various pits in the neighbourhood.

Do you know of no other advantage arising to the manufacture from coals, but so far as they are used in steam engines, and in different processes of the manufacture?—I do not recollect any other advantage arising from coals in the woollen manufactory but what I have already stated.

What do you think of the advantage of fuel in the manufacturer's houses?—It certainly is a very great convenience; but it is that which no more accommodates the manufacturer than other labouring people in other parts of the community.

Do you know of any part of the country in which the woollen manufacture is established in a considerable degree where fuel is not cheap in the inhabitants houses?—I cannot answer that

that question, because I am not so well acquainted with manufacturers, where coals are dearer than in Saddleworth.

Do you know of any considerable extent of manufacturing country on the left side of the Aire?---I am not well acquainted with the manufactory on the left side of the Aire, if I understand what river is meant by the Aire: if I had the names of the country mentioned to me, I might perhaps understand it better.

Are you acquainted with the neighbourhood of Leeds?---Leeds I know.

Taking it on the left side of the Aire in an extent round Leeds?---At Leeds coals are a good deal cheaper than with us.

Do you know what the price of coals at Leeds is?---I believe between six and seven shillings per ton; but I cannot speak positively to it; but I learned that from the conversations I have had with different persons upon the subject.

Do you recollect the situation of Keighley?---I do not know Keighley; I never was at Keighley in my life.

Are you acquainted with the situation of Castlebridge?---I am not.

Do you recollect how far the manufactory extends from Leeds in a line upon the York road?---I do not. Leeds lies at the distance of

thirty miles or better from us; and it is a place we very seldom go to.

Were you understood right, that the great consumption of coals in Saddleworth was in the fire engines?—I did not say so. I said a great consumption we had no occasion for; for of fire engines at Saddleworth there was but one instance; and the consumption of coal requisite in the various branches of the manufacture, where there is water sufficient to work the mills, is but of trifling value in comparison to that consumption which a steam engine requires.

In the working, then, of any engines that may be necessary, or that may be used in the manufactory, is it preferable to work them by water to working them by coal?—Certainly.

Do you ever use coals at fifteen shillings per ton for a steam engine?—I have no steam engine, nor do I use coals for that purpose; but the same coals, and of the price which I mention, are used for the little steam engine which I have alluded to before.

Has it fallen in your way to observe the steam engine? The question meant to be asked is, whether it is not the small coal that is used in the steam engine which sells at an inferior price, and which is not fit for family use?—An inferior coal will certainly do for the steam engine

engine to that which is requisite for some other purposes.

Is it not that coal that is necessarily dug up in order to come to the better coal, that is always applied to a steam engine?—I believe, for the steam engines, they use the small coal; but that coal, even with us, bears what I call a high price; that coal is not more than four or five shillings per ton less than the best.

Would that coal be saleable at all, if it was not applied to an engine?—If there was no other to be had, it certainly would.

Whether, in the summer time, there is not a difficulty to get that sort of coal?—I think there is more generally a difficulty in getting that coal in winter than in summer.

The witness was directed to withdraw.

Then Mr. WILLIAM FISHER was called in; and having been sworn, was examined as follows:

Of what business are you; and where do you live?—I am a merchant at Leeds.

In what article do you deal as a merchant?—In cloth and coatings.

How long have you dealt in that article?—About twenty-eight years.

Has the price of wool risen or fallen of late?
 —In 1798, I went into Northumberland and purchased from five to six hundred packs of wool; the average price I then gave was twenty shillings and sixpence per stone, of twenty-four pound to the stone; in 1799, the price was on the average twenty-four shillings and sixpence, making an advance of four shillings on the stone.

What was that advance owing to?—The insufficiency from the demand for goods.

How long had that been the case?—Not one year; because the price of wool in 1798 was twenty shillings and sixpence.

Have you perceived that, of late, there has been an insufficiency to supply the demand?—Most certainly.

In what places?—In Northumberland, and the borders of Scotland.

Have you been of late able to procure any from either of those places?—I have made application without any success.

Application for what?—For wool; being informed there was none to be met with, either in Northumberland or on the borders of Scotland.

Of what sort of wool was that?—The fleece wool grown in that country.

Was

Was it the long combing wool, or the short wool for cloth?—The short wool.

Have you endeavoured to procure it from any other place?—I came up to London with a view of buying a sort of wool called livery, to mix with the Northumberland wool; and I could only purchase about seventy packs, a quantity insufficient for our wants.

What quantity did you want?—I wished to have bought a much more considerable quantity.

How much more?—From two to three hundred packs.

What inquiries did you make for the purpose of procuring that quantity?—To the best of my knowledge I visited every house in the Borough and other places, and could only meet with the quantity I have mentioned, of seventy packs.

Did you prosecute those inquiries throughout every part of this town from which the trade have been usually supplied with this commodity?—I called upon every house that I was acquainted with.

Did you confine yourself as to price? Was it owing to not giving a proper price that you could not be supplied?—I was willing to have given some advance.

You applied throughout the trade for that particular sort of wool?—I did.

Have you experienced any diminution of

your own trade, or any inability to supply your customers in consequence of not having been able to get wool for that purpose?—I have experienced so much inconvenience as to have been obliged to return, I may safely say, one half of the orders I had received from the continent of Europe.

From what cause?—From the insufficiency of wool to make the goods.

Was there any other cause but that?—None.

What sort of wool did you want to have executed those orders?—Chiefly the lower sorts.

Was you not able to procure the proper wool even for the lower sorts of goods?—I was not.

At what period of time is it you speak of having been under the necessity of rejecting one half of the orders you received?—Since these last two months.

Has it happened that any of your customers have agreed to postpone their orders, in consequence of the difficulty of supplying them?—Several have been willing to postpone their orders till after the new clip, or the next clip.

Have you any reason to believe that the demand in future will be less than it has been?—None.

You stated that you had been twenty-eight years a merchant employed in this trade; whether

ther of late years you have observed a diminution in the quantity of fine wool in this country?—I cannot speak to that subject, because the wool we have made use of has been chiefly of the growth of Northumberland and the borders of Scotland, mixed with the livery I named before.

What is that sort of wool that you call the livery?—It is the lowest sort of wool but one.

Was it from choice or from necessity that that was taken to be mixed with the other?—From choice.

Has the wool been used sooner after shearing of late than it used to be, or than it ought to be?—It has with us been used much sooner.

How much sooner?—Four months.

What was that owing to?—To necessity; from the insufficiency of the supply.

Examined by the Lords.

You have said there is an insufficiency of the lower kinds of wool in your markets; do you believe that an Irish manufacturer could outbid an English manufacturer in a competition for wool in the English market?—I do; because the wages in Ireland would most probably not be more than one half of what they are
with

with us at Leeds ; but I cannot speak exactly upon that head, but I think that at least.

Do you know, or have you heard that the annual exportation of woollen manufactures, paying in Ireland a duty of more than five and a half per cent. has been for several years of the value of more than six hundred thousand pounds ; and in the last year, of the value of more than one million sterling ?—Not being in the Irish trade, I cannot speak so well upon this subject as some gentlemen that will succeed me as witnesses.

The witness was directed to withdraw.

Then Mr. WILLIAM HUSTLER was called in again, and examined as follows :

(*By a Lord.*) What is the price per ton of coal in the manufacturing parts of Yorkshire ?—In some parts the price is from five to seven shillings a ton ; I believe in other parts as high as fifteen or sixteen shillings.

What is the medium price ?—Not knowing the exact quantities consumed in each part, I cannot state the medium price. About Bradford and Leeds, I believe, the price is, as I said before, from six shillings to seven shillings, or from five to seven.

Have not you reason to believe that the price is higher at Liverpool ?—The present price for
which

which we sell coals at Liverpool is ten and sixpence a ton.

What do you take to be the expence of carriage per ton from Liverpool to Dublin, to Newry and to Cork?—We have sent them at five, and from five to six shillings per ton. The present rate is higher, in consequence of the demand for shipping, I believe, for the transport service.

In addition then to the price and to freight, do not you know there is also an export duty and an import duty?—I know that there are such duties.

Does not Yorkshire produce, taken in the aggregate, a considerable quantity of wool?—A large quantity of wool is grown in the East-Riding of the county of York.

Is that not consumed in the Yorkshire manufactories?—I believe generally so.

You stated that the sheep had fallen off, you believed, in many respects. Whether you have not heard that, by the nature of many inclosures, as well as by their course of farming, as also by the change of breed, there are in many pastures a larger number of sheep kept upon the same surface than was formerly kept?—I have heard that a greater number of Southdown sheep can be kept upon a pasture of a certain size than of the Lincolnshire, or of some other breeds of sheep.

Have

Have you ever had any dealings for wool in Lincolnshire?—I have bought large quantities of wool in Lincolnshire.

Has there ever been any manufactories of wool in Lincolnshire?—I recollect a manufacture being carried on at Louth in Lincolnshire.

Is that manufactory carried on successfully now?—I believe it has declined of late considerably; but I cannot say whether any is carried on there now or not.

Do you know the reason of the decline of the manufactory at Louth?—I believe it is owing in some considerable degree to the workmen not being so well acquainted with the manufacture, and higher wages having been given in consequence of workmen being brought from distant parts.

Do you believe that the dearth of fuel is not the principal reason why the manufacture of wool cannot be carried on in Lincolnshire with success?—I believe the dearth of fuel is a discouragement; but the price of coals at Louth, I think, does not much exceed, if any thing, the price of coals in some part of Saddleworth. Whether the manufacture is carried on successfully I cannot speak positively, not having inquired the price very lately at Louth.

The witness was directed to withdraw.

Then

Then Mr. JOHN WILLIS was called in, and examined as follows:

Where do you live?—At Stroud in Gloucestershire.

In what department of the woollen business are you employed?—I am a wool-stapler for Messrs. Jones, Wellington, and Park.

Where do they carry on their business?—They have one warehouse at Ross in Herefordshire, and one at Dodbridge near Stroud in Gloucestershire.

Have you for some time past been used to purchase wool in different counties?—For these eighteen years past, I have been used to purchase wool in Shropshire, Herefordshire, and some in Worcestershire; but chiefly in Shropshire and Herefordshire.

Have you found any difficulty of late years in purchasing the quantity you wanted?—Yes.

State the circumstances of difficulty which you have experienced?—By reason some of the farmers that I bought of, for four or five years past, have not had more than half the quantity that I used to buy of them.

At what time of the year did you usually make your purchases?—In July and August.

What stock did you lay in, and to last you for what time?—I generally bought in a quantity to serve till towards the end of September.

Have

Have you found any difficulty in procuring the quantity to last you till September?—Yes, we generally buy two or three hundred packs in the spring in March or April.

Have you been able to procure that quantity in the present year from the growers of wool?—We have applied by letters to different farmers, and they write us word that they do not know of any wool unfold in the country.

From what counties did you receive this answer?—From Shropshire, Herefordshire, and Somersetshire, and from Worcestershire.

Up to what time will the quantity you have now in hand last?—I think it will last till about the end of June.

Have you, during the whole eighteen years that you have been in business, ever experienced a similar difficulty in procuring wool?—Not till this year.

Are you able to impute this difficulty to any particular cause?—I think some by the increase of trade, and some by inclosures.

Do you mean that the quantity capable of being brought to market is diminished by inclosures?—Part of it.

What is the effect that you have observed from inclosures upon the growth of wool?—That some of the farmers have not had above half the quantity they used to have.

Have

Have you observed a gradual decrease prior to the present year, and how many years back?—Yes; for, I think, about four or five years back.

When you make purchases of wool, do you purchase the whole stock of the grower, or parts only?—I purchase the whole stock of fleeces of each farmer I buy of.

Is that usual with people in the same trade?—I believe it is.

Did you deal with persons, who were dealing also at the same time with other persons in the same trade, or with those who exclusively sold to you the whole wool you had?—They always sold to me the whole wool that they had.

Are you aware of any place from which, or any means by which you can supply the deficiency at present experienced?—No.

What is the particular sort of wool you buy?—The clothing wool.

Have you lately applied at Northampton for the purchase of wool?—I was at Northampton last Wednesday and Thursday was a week.

Did you then apply to any wool-staplers for wool?—I inquired of different wool-staplers what wool they had by them, if they had any sorts; they said, they had very little but what was under orders.

Could you find any clothing wool?—No.

Did

Did you get any from the persons to whom you applied; and if you did, what quantity in proportion to what you wanted?—I did not get any.

From your acquaintance with the manufactures, are you of opinion that the manufactures could occupy more wool if more could be supplied for them?—I believe they would, according to our orders.

Are you capable of forming a judgment whether the present dearth arises from any temporary causes, or from such causes as are likely to continue?—From such causes as are likely to continue.

Examined by the Lords.

Whether you have made inquiry in any one parish in England, with a view to ascertain the number of sheep raised in that parish before inclosure, compared with the number raised in the parish after the inclosure?—I have not made any inquiry.

In no one instance?—No.

What prices did you offer at Northampton?—I asked them what prices they sold for; they said they had none to sell.

Did you tempt them with a price?—I did not; because they said they were all under orders.

Whether you consider that the sheep bred
upon

upon the uninclosed land produces in any degree, either as to quality or quantity, such wool as is produced by the sheep in inclosures, which are taken more care of, and where there is a greater attention to the breed?—The wool that is bred upon uninclosed land is certainly better in quality, but it does not produce so much as on the inclosed lands, or of the cross breed.

The witness was directed to withdraw.

Then Mr. JEREMIAH NAYLOR was called in, and examined as follows :

Are you a buyer of cloth, and where do you live?—I am a buyer of cloth, and I live at Wakefield in Yorkshire.

Have you dealt considerably in the purchase of cloth and coatings, and for how long time?—I have dealt considerably in cloth and coatings for these twenty years past, in business for myself. I have attended regularly Leeds market, which is the town where we buy our cloth in the raw state, for twenty-four years last past.

Have you observed any diminution in the quantity of cloth of late; any diminution in the supply?—I have experienced a very great deficiency within these last nine months past, except within these two months past there have

been rather more goods in the market, owing to a temporary stoppage in our remittances from the Continent.

From what part of the Continent did that happen?—Hamburg.

Can you state to what cause that diminution of the trade was owing?—It was owing to want of remittances from the Continent that there was more cloth in the last two months in the market.

Before the last two months, what was the state of the market?—The state of the market from June to last February was such that I was not able to buy a sufficient supply of goods for the orders that I had, and was obliged to leave my orders unexecuted.

Can you state to what cause it was owing that you experienced that inability to supply your customers?—In my opinion it is owing to the increased demand we have had for these three or four years last past; the demand has been such that the wool, the manufacturers inform me, is grown so scarce, that they cannot get a sufficient supply of the low and middle priced wools to make this kind of cloths of.

Did you, in consequence of not being able to supply your customers, lose the orders that you were obliged to return, or have you executed them since?—I could not execute them

at that time, for the reason that I have given, and have not had it in my power to execute them since, it being for the American trade; and if I did not send them the last autumn, I was not to execute them.

Are there at this time any orders for particular cloths that you are not able to supply?—I have at present orders for goods; and when I came from the country I went round among the manufacturers, and was not able to meet with half the supply of goods that I wanted; particular goods.

From the knowledge that you have of the trade, do you think it will now admit of any export of wool without great inconvenience and injury to the trade?—It is my opinion, that the trade of this country is gradually increasing, and that it will not admit of any exportation of wool from this country; and it is my opinion, that if we receive our remittances from the Continent, that there is not a sufficient supply of wool to execute the orders that we have at present upon hand.

Do you know of any cause, or have you any reason to apprehend either that the demand for your goods will be diminished, or the growth of wool increased in this country?—As to the growth of wool, it is a question that I cannot answer, because I am no buyer of wool; and

in answer, whether the sale of cloth is likely to increase, I have not the least doubt of it, if we receive remittances from the Continent.

The circumstance of not receiving remittances from the Continent, is that temporary or likely to continue?—I look upon it as temporary.

Do you know whether a considerable quantity of Spanish wool is used in the cloth manufacture?—I am not a dealer in wool; I can only answer that I buy cloths of that description, which are made entirely of Spanish wool.

Do you know whether within the last eight or nine months there was any difficulty of procuring Spanish wool?—Within these last eight or nine months I had considerable orders for that article; I was obliged to suspend executing them for the want of Spanish wool, and could not execute them till a fresh supply was imported into this country.

From what period have you observed the increase in the demand in the Leeds market for cloth?—The increase in the demand has been gradual for these four or five years last past, and my own trade has been gradually increasing from that time.

Should the remittances come from the Continent, would the trade of this year be less than the few later years, or greater than formerly?—

The

The returns of my own trade would be considerably greater ; and I look in general that it would be the same all through the country if we could get wool to supply the orders that are at present from the Continent.

Are you then aware that the trade can suffer any thing from any cause except from the export of its wool?—It is my opinion, that our trade will yearly increase if we can find sufficiency of wool to execute it ; the only stoppage of the increase of the woollen trade of this country will be for want of wool.

In your judgment will the trade suffer if any part of the wool of this country is exported?—It is my opinion that it will certainly be so,

Examined by the Lords,

Whether under all the circumstances you have stated, you see any near probability of wool being exported to any considerable extent?—That is a question I cannot answer, for I am no dealer in wool myself.

Do you happen to know that the demand for woollen manufactures has greatly increased, to the amount of millions, within the last two or three years from the States of America, from the British Continental Colonies, from the foreign West Indies, from the East Indies, from

Africa, from Portugal, from Germany, and from Ireland?—From Portugal I can answer very safely, that it has very much increased of late; also from America; as to any other parts mentioned I do not know.

From Ireland?—I do not do any business to Ireland.

Whether you think that other countries are likely to enter into a competition for the raw material, with a country which is manufacturing and exporting to an extent fully equal to or beyond the produce of the raw material?—I can answer that question no otherwise than thus: That it is only Ireland that will have the raw material from us; and not being acquainted with that kingdom, I cannot give any other answer.

Has not an increase taken place in the manufacture, between the 25th of March 1799, and the 25th of March last, in Yorkshire?—There is a great increase.

It amounts to nearly one-fourth increase?—It is a very great increase; I cannot answer what it amounts to.

You said you found a difficulty in executing some orders for the American market?—Yes.

What is the credit in the American market?—The credit to America varies. There are different

different credits. Some people pay us very early. They are but very few. To others we give a twelve months credit.

Is it not more than twelve months? do not you think it pretty reasonable in the American market, if you get your returns within two years?—I am obliged to give longer credit. But I make it a rule if any house takes a longer credit with me for any parcel of goods than the time stipulated, I am not very eager to send them any more goods.

It is understood that the general credit in the American market was much longer than in the European market; the consequence is, that if there happens to be a great demand in Europe, American orders are of course the last executed. Is that so?—The orders that we receive from America are all at twelve months credit. If our correspondent does not remit us at that time, he pays us interest from the twelve months; and, as I said before, if he does not pay us pretty near the time of the usual credit, we do not send him any more goods.

The American credit being a longer credit than the European credit, the consequence is, that the European market will be first supplied; and if there is a deficiency of the quantity ordered, that deficiency will arise upon the American commission?—We give as long credit to

the orders that we have even for our English correspondents as we do to our correspondents in America; our general credit is twelve months.

Your house is the principal house in the American trade?—We do very largely in that trade; but I can affirm that our credit to London is twelve months, and it is the same to the Continent of America,

Considering that wool is so bulky a commodity, do not you conceive that it would not be difficult by a revenue regulation to prevent the clandestine exportation of it?—That is a question I cannot answer; I was never in the wool trade, nor I do not know the regulations there are upon the coast of this country to protect it or of Ireland.

Do not you conceive that it would not be a difficult matter to throw very great impediment in the way of a clandestine trade?—It would be difficult in my opinion,

Do you believe that there is any clandestine exportation of wool at present?—I do believe that there was formerly a great deal of wool clandestinely sent from this country before the war to France; but, since the war, the manufactories have ceased, and therefore they have no occasion for our wools,

Do

Do you think that, whilst the demand for wool in this country so much exceeds the quantity that they can get for manufacture, that the risk of the clandestine exportation is worth any man's running at the additional price he would get for his wool?—Whenever there comes a peace, which I hope will some time happen, I have no doubt but it will be smuggled, and will leave this country in very large quantities as it did before the war.

Do you think any greater quantity will go than before the war?—I have not the least doubt of it, if the wool is exported to Ireland, that it will be impossible, with all the exertions that government can use, to prevent it from being smuggled or clandestinely carried into other parts of Europe.

The Witness was directed to withdraw.

Then Mr. BENJAMIN GOTT was called in; and having been sworn, was examined as follows:

Are you concerned in any branch of the cloth trade or woollen manufactures of this country?—Yes.

Where do you carry them on?—At Leeds in Yorkshire.

Is that the place of your residence?—Yes.

Are

Are you acquainted with the woollen trade to Ireland?—Yes, I am.

For how many years back have you been acquainted with that trade?—During my apprenticeship, and since that period, twenty years or more.

From the knowledge you have of that trade, what, in your judgment, would be the consequence of permitting wool to be exported to that country?—I apprehend, that under the circumstances in which the Union with Ireland will place us, that is, allowing the wool of this country to be exported to Ireland free of duty, whilst, on the other hand, the protecting duties in Ireland, are to continue being seven pence halfpenny per yard on all British milled woollens imported into Ireland, and ten per cent. on that duty, making a duty of eight pence and a fraction per yard, the effect will be to take the wool from this country to manufacture it in Ireland.

Do you think that there is more wool in this country than is sufficient for the immediate supply of its own manufactures?—No, certainly not.

If any wool should be sent from this country to Ireland, would there be enough remaining
in

in order to carry on the manufactures of the country?—Certainly not.

What do you think would be the effect of this decrease of manufactures upon the manufacturers themselves?—The effect of the decrease of the wool would be, that the manufacturer must either follow the raw material, or he must be a burthen to the parish in which he lives.

What is the average value of the woollen drapery imported into Ireland?—There are two descriptions of woollen cloth exported to Ireland; one broad cloth, the other narrow cloth. The average price of narrow cloth I estimate at three shillings and four pence per yard; the lowest general price being about one shilling and eight pence per yard, of which the Irish, from one shilling and eight pence to half a crown, purchase large quantities even under the duty of eight pence and a fraction per yard, as I have already mentioned, and extending generally from one shilling and eight pence a yard to six shillings a yard; the mean value being three shillings and four pence. The average price of broad cloths exported to Ireland I should estimate at six shillings and eight pence per yard.

Do you know the reason why within the last year there has been so much a larger demand

mand for cloths for the supply of Ireland than formerly?—There have been two causes; one is the increased army establishment of Ireland; the other is, that during the rebellion in Ireland no cloth of any consequence was exported from this country, the shops there were of course exhausted of their stocks on hand, and when peace was re-established they purchased a larger quantity than usual.

Do you happen to know whether the Irish do not exclusively manufacture for the clothing of their own military in the country?—The Irish manufacture, I believe, exclusively for their own army establishments, and they manufacture all the remainder of their wool into cloth; but that not being equal altogether to the demands of the country, they draw the remainder of their supply from Great Britain, because they are not allowed to possess our raw material.

Explain what you mean by the remainder?—The army of Ireland is supplied from the manufactures of Ireland by the regulations of the Irish government. As I understand the increased supply of the army operates in this manner, there being a larger number of troops in the country than usual, more of the wool of the country is necessarily employed in clothing them,

them, and in finding bedding and blankets; consequently, there is a greater demand for other descriptions of cloth.

Then you are to be understood, that it was to supply the other descriptions of cloth which the Irish could not supply, on account of the manufacture for the use of the armies?—Yes; and also from the necessity of their army being clothed rapidly, they were obliged to take some part of the supply of their army from this country.

(*By a Lord.*) You have said that the reason why the Irish army is usually clothed by cloth manufactured in Ireland, was in consequence of a regulation of the Irish government?—I do not know the circumstance of my own knowledge.

It is either by an act of parliament or by a regulation of the Irish government. Whether you conceive that if it was not for that act or that regulation of the Irish government, that the army in Ireland would be clothed with Irish cloth?—I apprehend they would be clothed with Irish cloth, when the duty as it now stands is eight pence or more per yard on English cloth; because I frequently have found in the course of my business with merchants in Ireland, that there are times when particular
descrip-

descriptions of Irish manufactured cloths are, as they informed me, so nearly on a balance with the cloths of this country, that they occasionally purchase them, and at other times the duty prevents them.

Is not the Irish cloth extremely inferior to the English cloth?—Crimson coatings, scarlet coatings, of the manufacture of Ireland, are so nearly on a par with the manufactures of similar descriptions of goods in this country, that sometimes they are purchased from hence; and at other times, they find it more their interest to purchase their own manufactures.

Do you mean to say they are like in appearance; or that Irish cloth, in fact, of the same price, is considered to be as good as English cloth; that it wears as well?—I have no doubt it wears as well, of the description of cloth which I speak of as in competition with our own manufacture.

The witness was directed to withdraw.

Then Mr. JOSIAS NOTTAGE was called in; and having been sworn, was examined as follows:

Where do you live?—At Bocking in Essex.

In what business are you?—A manufacturer.

In what state is the woollen manufacturers at that place?—Quite on the decline.

How

How long has it been the case that the woollen manufacturers have been declining at that place?—They have been declining some years.

Can you state the reason of that decline?—Partly from rivalship in the north, and partly from the Spanish war.

Have the manufactories in Yorkshire any advantage in respect to machinery over the manufactories established at Bocking?—Yes; they have.

In consequence of this decline of the manufactures, what has been the effect upon the poor rates there?—They have been increased enormously.

In what proportion?—I have known them to be as low as eight shillings in the pound; the last year they were twenty-four shillings and sixpence, and they are upon the increase.

Do you know of any other cause of producing this increase, excepting the decline of the manufactures?—I suppose the high price of grain at present rather increases it than not.

Is the principal cause of it the decline of the manufacturers?—It is.

Have the neighbourhood felt an increase in their poor's rates, where the manufactures have declined likewise?—They have.

The witness was directed to withdraw.

Then

Then Mr. JAMES MASTERMAN was called in; and having been sworn, was examined as follows :

Do you know what is the amount of the poor's rates at Lavenham in Suffolk?—They are now thirty-two shillings in the pound, and are likely to be forty shillings.

Do you know at what the poor's rates stood four years ago in the same place?—From eleven to twelve shillings; they will be forty shillings in the next quarter.

Were they the last year the same as at present?—I think they were.

Was there a woollen manufacture carried on when the rates were at ten shillings?—Yes.

What is become of that manufacture?—It is carrying on now in a smaller degree.

But it is materially declined?—Yes.

How many manufactures are there there?—Only two of any consequence.

How many were there some time back?—I cannot exactly answer to that; there were several.

The witness was directed to withdraw.

Then Mr. WILLIAM JENKINS was called in; and having been sworn, was examined as follows :

At

At what place do you live, and what business are you?—I live at Shepton Mallet in Somersetshire; I am a clothier.

For what length of time have you pursued that business?—Upwards of twenty-six years.

Is the quantity of English wool manufactured at that place greater or less than it used to be?—I think it is considerably less.

Is that the case with the manufactories in that neighbourhood?—I consider it is.

Do you know to what parts of the country that manufacture has been transferred?—Principally to Yorkshire.

What species of cloth used to be manufactured at Shepton Mallet?—Cloth at six or seven shillings a yard, in great quantities. I believe there are not any now manufactured at that price.

Have you lately been in Ireland?—I have. I returned last night direct from Dublin.

Do you know whether, at this time, there is in Ireland any cloth manufacture going on?—There are some cloth manufactures going on in Ireland, and that are increasing in their manufactures, and making a very good article.

At what place have you yourself seen a manufacture going on in Ireland?—At Middleton near Cork, and at several other places near Cork.

Has that manufactory near Cork been long established

established, or is it lately built?—I believe it has been built within six or seven years; I cannot speak accurately as to a year or two.

Is it a considerable building?—It is a very considerable building indeed; such as we have very few in England in point of extent and magnitude, and capable of making a great quantity of goods. It is built in every respect to save manual labour as much as possible.

In what respect is that circumstance considered in the construction of the manufactory; how is that provided for?—So much is done by water.

How far is this manufactory from Cork?—About twelve Irish miles.

How many English miles is that?—About sixteen English miles, calculating eleven Irish miles to fourteen English.

Is it nearer or further from Dublin than from Cork?—It is at a greater distance from Dublin.

What sort of road is there between Cork and this manufactory?—At some seasons of the year a good road; at most seasons I believe.

Did you observe some of the cloth manufactured at that place?—I have seen a great deal of the cloth manufactured at that place in the hands of men I have been in the habit of doing business with for upwards of twenty years:
considerably

considerably more than twenty years I have been doing business with many houses who now purchase, I believe, frequently, goods manufactured at Middleton.

Do several of your former customers deal with this manufactory?—Many of them in Cork, many of them in Dublin; several of them in Limerick, and some in Waterford.

When you supplied those customers at the different places you stated, at what place did you carry on your manufactory?—I carried it on where I do now, at Shepton Mallet; I do not say that I do not do business with the same persons now; but they buy at that manufactory, goods they tell me of the like quality, and full as well worth their money, if not lower, than I can supply them with, or they tell me than they can have from other manufacturers in England.

Did you observe whether the manufactured article was equal in goodness with the same kind of article manufactured in this country?—I consider it a very good article that they now manufacture, and improving in quality; they are nearly as good as those sent from the west of England.

Do you know whether other persons in Shepton Mallet, besides yourself, used formerly to send their goods to Ireland?—Several houses

in the town of Shepton Mallet have long been in the habit of doing business in Ireland, and do at this present time considerable business; a regular trade.

You spoke of the decline of trade at Shepton Mallet: do you know whether your neighbours as well as yourself, have lost part of their custom in consequence of this manufactory being established in Ireland?—I spoke of the decline of one branch only of the trade at Shepton Mallet; the coarse trade.

When you formed a comparison between the article manufactured at Middleton manufactory in Ireland, with the western manufactures in this country, are the goods wrought at the western manufactory of this country, equal in goodness to those manufactured in other parts of this kingdom?—I think them fully equal in quality to the goods of every other part of England.

Do you mean that the Irish are equally good?—Yes, the Irish manufacture.

The question asked is this, Whether the goods manufactured in the west of England are equal in goodness to those manufactured in other parts of this kingdom?—Fully equal to any manufactured in this country.

Did you state what sort of cloths you saw yourself at the manufactory at Middleton?—I did not.

Was

Was it the fine sort or the coarse cloths that you saw manufactured at Middleton?—Both coarse and fine.

Do you know of any other manufactory in Ireland, or have you seen any other cloth manufactory in Ireland?—I know of others; but from delicacy, being a manufacturer myself, I declined going into their manufactories.

The witness was directed to withdraw.

The counsel were directed to withdraw.

The counsel and the witness were called in, and the witness directed to confine his answers to facts within his own knowledge.

The witness was asked, Have you yourself seen any other manufactory in Ireland, besides that at Middleton which you spoke of?—I have seen several cloth manufactories of coarse goods.

Is that manufactory at Middleton which you yourself saw capable of carrying on business to a considerable extent?—Yes, it is.

Prior to the establishment of this manufactory at Middleton, you supplied persons at Limerick, Cork, and those other places, who were your customers: did you use to supply them wholly with the articles of the description

that is now bought from the Middleton manufactory?—No, not wholly; it is customary for merchants to deal with a variety of manufacturers.

Did you know that those customers of yours who are now supplied in part from the Middleton manufactory, did derive any part of their supply before that from any other Irish manufactory?—I cannot say.

Is it your judgment respecting this manufactory at Middleton, that there would be any difficulty if English wool were exported to that place of carrying on the manufactory there to advantage?—No difficulty whatever, but to greater advantage than I can manufacture at present.

In what respect to greater advantage than you could manufacture at Shepton Mallet?—Because much less opposition will be given in Ireland to the introduction of Machinery than what I feel and others in the town in which I live. I have upon introducing machinery been obliged to apply to government for military protection, and they have granted it to me; the town collectively has applied for military protection before introducing machinery.

In point of fact, has machinery been introduced into the manufactory at Shepton Mallet?—It has in a degree.

Is

Is it in as great an extent as it might be introduced into a new manufactory in another country?—By no means; I would myself introduce machines that I do not now make use of, but for the great opposition I know I must meet with from the labouring manufacturers.

You have desisted in consequence of that opposition from a full introduction of machinery into your manufactory?—I have,

The machinery which you have not ventured to introduce at Shepton Mallet, but which might be introduced in a new place, what species of the work is that to carry on?—It is, in the dressing part, a gig-mill.

Is there any other machinery besides that, not yet introduced, which might be introduced?—There is.

What is it?—Shearing by water.

Any other besides that?—Those are the principal machinery; there is a brushing machine besides.

Can you state what difference of advantage per cent. in the manufactory would be derived from a full introduction of all that machinery?—It cannot but be very considerable.

About what extent; ten, twenty, or more or less per cent?—I have never considered that question.

Do you know how that manufactory at Middle-

dleton is circumstanced with respect to a supply of coals and fuel?—I presume they must have them from England.

How is the manufactory at Shepton Mallet supplied with that article?—Very well supplied; but I consider that the advantage gained by having our coals cheaper at Shepton Mallet than they have at Middleton, or in other parts where manufactories may be erected, if English wool is introduced into Ireland, that that small advantage would be much more than counteracted by the far greater advantage in Ireland, arising from labour being cheaper, the lower class of people in Ireland not being in the habit of getting so much money as our manufacturers, and not in the habit of living in the comfortable manner that our labouring manufacturers do, if they are industrious.

Do you know whether at that place, at Middleton, there are advantages in the article of house-rent, and all the necessaries of life?—I can only speak to that from hearsay.

Are provisions much cheaper in Ireland than at Shepton Mallet?—I have been absent from Shepton Mallet these three months, and therefore I cannot answer that question. I conceive that provisions have advanced at Shepton Mallet, bread in particular.

Whether you have derived sufficient knowledge

ledge to say whether a manufacturer could live cheaper at Middleton than at Shepton Mallet, every thing considered?—They are in the habit of living poorer than the labouring people of Shepton Mallet, and of course are content with what does not amount to so much money. I apprehend also that the gentlemen of Ireland are at present very desirous to increase manufactories in that kingdom, and that they are inclined, where they see a probability of men laying out their money, to give employment to the poor, that they will give them their lands upon low leases, as they term it.

In your judgement, would the circumstance of additional machinery introduced into a new manufactory, alone counterbalance the difference in the price of fuel at Shepton Mallet and at Middleton?—Greatly to the advantage of the Middleton manufactory, or others that may be established upon the same principle.

[The witness was directed to withdraw.]

How long ago is it since these riots took place on account of the machinery at Shepton Mallet?—I believe about six years ago, in September last, I had some warehouses burnt down that I believe were set on fire by our manufacturers; I cannot prove it.

What

What riot occasioned your application to government for the interposition of the military?—I was erecting a mill with an intention to introduce new machinery; at that time our manufacturers, in general, threatened that it should be pulled down.

Was that a gig-mill?—No; they were scribbling machines.

You returned from Ireland last night?—Yes.

How long were you in Ireland?—I was in Ireland about ten weeks; two or three days more or less, I cannot say.

You mentioned having had several communications in Dublin with different persons relative to woollen manufactures; did you understand that in that neighbourhood they were going to erect woollen manufactories, under the idea of the Union taking place?—I cannot say under the idea of the Union taking place.

Do you know the price of wool in Ireland?—I do not.

Do you consider the woollen manufactory to be on the decline throughout the western counties of England?—No; I do not believe the woollen manufactories, generally speaking, to be on the decline in the west of England; but
I well

I well know that the decline of the coarse woollens is increasing.

That is, that a particular branch of the woollen manufacture is on the decline in the western counties?—I believe so.

Do you not principally ascribe that decline to the opposition made by the common people to the introduction of machines?—I do very much upon this principle, that the Yorkshire manufacturers can with much greater facility introduce machinery than we can in the west of England; and in consequence of their possessing machinery before we introduced the scribblers and carders, the machines I was speaking of before, they in a great measure possessed the trade of the low woollens, and possessing it they will keep it; and much to their credit. The opposition that we generally meet with in the west of England to introducing machinery is so great, that until the Yorkshire manufacturers have stolen the article away from us, we are almost afraid to introduce it.

Do you not know that in some mills in your country where such machinery has been introduced, small detachments of troops have been constantly kept to defend those mills?—Whenever applied for they have constantly been given us.

Do

Do you know the sort of wool there is in Ireland?—They have so little clothing wool at present in Ireland, that I have not been particularly attentive to noticing the wool, though intimate with the manufacturers in Cork that consume a great deal of the wools of Ireland.

What is not clothing wool?—Wool of so long a staple that it must be combed and not scribbled. Scribbling is by short cards.

Whether you understand that any new manufactories are erecting without any reference to the Union?—Only this of Mr. Allen's.

Whether the clothing wool of England will be necessary to the Manufactures of Ireland?—Yes; it will give them an opportunity to manufacture cloth of a quality that they now have not an opportunity to do.

You have said that at Shepton Mallet the supply of coals is at a low and reasonable price?—I believe they cost us from five-pence half-penny to sixpence a bushel.

Do you consider that as being at a low price?—I do not consider it as at a low price, because we pay more for it than we did some years ago. I believe a penny a bushel more, besides an advance of carriage.

At how much is it a ton?—We buy it by the bushel.

What

What is the weight of your bushel?—I cannot say.

You use machinery in the course of your manufactory?—Yes.

By what means do you put the machinery into action?—By water; the streams of water in Ireland are very general.

Whether you have travelled over any considerable portion of Ireland, so as to form a judgment upon that subject?—I have travelled through most parts of Ireland, Dublin, Cork, Limerick, Waterford, Belfast, Newry.

Do you happen to be informed whether the gig-mill and scribbling machines were not violently opposed in Yorkshire?—I do not know.

Have your people got an idea, that the scribbling machine and the gig-mill are prohibited by law?—We manufacturers had no idea of the kind.

Is that an idea prevailing among the labourers?—Yes; it prevails amongst the labourers, that a gig-mill is a machine that ought not to be used.

Do not you know there have been trials about it, whether it was not forbidden by law?—I believe there was a trial in Wiltshire, at Salisbury, some time ago, which terminated in favour of the manufacturers to introduce the gig-mill.

By

By what means have you come at that information?—Having been told it by manufacturers who were engaged in it.

You stated, you went over to Ireland for orders; did those orders decrease in consequence of new manufactories by machinery in Ireland?—I do not know that they did; for the consumption is increasing there.

By consumption, do you mean demand?—The general consumption of goods in Ireland is increasing, of every sort of goods, I believe, though not at this present moment.

When you say the consumption has increased, do you understand that the demand for British manufactures has increased?—There is very little demand for them at this present time.

Do not you know that for the last year, down to the present period, there has been a greater demand in point of value, for British manufactures, and particularly for the woollen manufactures, than at any preceding period whatever, to Ireland?—I do; but I consider the country as greatly overstocked with goods, and the demand for goods is very trifling; there is a sufficient reason for the large importation of goods last year, and particularly of woollens, in consequence of the rebellion in that country the preceding year, when men in general had
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run out their stocks, and there was very little importation of goods from this country for a twelvemonth, during the rebellion.

Do you not know that in the preceding year the demand was very nearly as great as in the last year?—I was told by men dealing in the article in Ireland, that the importation of woollen goods the last year, far exceeded any year preceding.

Do you know that of your own knowledge?—I do not: I know it from my customers and many other causes.

If you had introduced the machinery in your own manufactory that you wished to have introduced, would you be afraid of any rivalry in Ireland?—If they had the wool from this country I should be afraid of a rivalry in the middling article of goods; and I see no reason why the manufacturer in Ireland should not manufacture fine goods upon as good terms as I do myself, or any other manufacturer having the opportunity to introduce the like machinery.

You stated, that the cause of the removal of the manufactory from Somerset to Yorkshire, was on account of the opposition to the machines: do you know any other cause than that?—That is the principal cause, as they are enabled

enabled to get up coarse goods lower than we can, having introduced machinery earlier, and being in possession of the trade.

Have you any reason to know, that provisions being cheaper in Yorkshire than in the western counties, has been the cause of the removal of the trade?—I have ever heard it attributed to the more general introduction of machinery than we have in the west of England, than from any other cause.

You have stated, that you travelled through Ireland, and have seen a number of streams of water in that country; is there not a great fall belonging to those streams which is a greater advantage to the manufactures, than the streams themselves?—I cannot answer that question, not having examined the falls. The greater the fall, certainly the more general must be the advantage.

The witness was directed to withdraw.

Then Mr. NATHANIEL WATHEN was called in; and having been sworn, was examined as follows:

Are you engaged in the cloth manufactory at Stroud in Gloucestershire?—Yes.

Do

Do you know whether the manufacture of English wool has of late decreased in the parishes of Stroud, Hampton, Bisley, Stonehouse, and Uley, in Gloucestershire?—It has very materially decreased.

For how many years past has it been upon the decrease?—About seven or eight years.

To what has that decrease been owing?—To the more early introduction of machinery in the north of England than in the south-west.

Has there been a greater quantity of Spanish wool manufactured at the places you have mentioned of late, than there has been of English wool?—I conceive there has been a greater number of bags of Spanish wool manufactured, than of packs of English.

Are there many machines of considerable use in the manufactory, which the manufacturer of Gloucestershire is, from apprehensions of tumult, or other similar circumstances, debarred the use of?—There is one very important piece of machinery that the manufacturers of Gloucestershire have not yet ventured to introduce, denominated shearing machines, from the use of which, great advantage would accrue to the manufacturer, if it was introduced.

Are coals in Gloucestershire dearer in the manufacturing part of that county per ton, than

the price mentioned at this bar by Mr. Hustler, at which they could be delivered at Newry and at Dublin?—The price of coals is as much as two shillings per ton dearer in all the manufacturing parishes in Gloucestershire, than they are at Newry or Dublin.

What is the average price per ton in Gloucestershire?—From eighteen to twenty-one shillings per ton.

How much per cent. upon the superfine cloth made in Gloucestershire does the expence of coals amount to, where there is an adequate supply of water?—Not to more than from five to ten shillings per cent. The expence of coals in the manufacture of cloth made of English wool, amounts probably, or nearly, from twelve to fifteen shillings per cent.

It has been stated, that the comparative rate of carriage from the western counties to Ireland and to Leeds, is in favour of Ireland; how do you account for the fact that the Yorkshire manufactory consumes a part of the wool of the western counties of England, though it might stay at home, without any expence of carriage?—A part of the wool of the western counties I speak of. I before stated that machinery was earlier introduced into Yorkshire than into Gloucestershire; the consequence of which was
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that the Yorkshire manufacturer derived great advantage, and of course trade diverged from the western counties into Yorkshire, where it has since continued; the western manufacturer having been engaged in the manufacture of Spanish wool to a much greater extent than formerly.

Do you therefore account for the carriage of wool from the west to Yorkshire for the purpose of manufacture, upon the principle that the western counties are themselves occupied with the manufacture of Spanish wool; and also that the British wool exported from these counties can, by means of machinery, be less expensively manufactured in Yorkshire?—I conceive that to be the case.

The witness was directed to withdraw.

Then Mr. ROBERT MEARS was called in; and having been sworn, was examined as follows:

Of what business are you, and where do you live?—I am a public dyer of wool, and live at Frome in Somersetshire.

Have you observed of late a less quantity of

wool brought to your manufactory for the purpose of being dyed than used to be?—I have observed lately a less quantity of English wool, I believe about one-third.

Has this been owing to a diminution in the trade, or to a diminution in the produce of the wool?—To a want of wool by the manufacturer.

Is that the case in the neighbourhood of Frome?—That is the case.

What sort of wool is it that you have been accustomed to, and that you have observed a deficiency in?—The wool that makes livery cloth, and the wool that makes second cloth.

Is that the long combing wool or the short?—Neither; it is a finer sort than the combing; it is wool which makes cloth from seven shillings a yard to twelve.

Have you observed in the towns of Westbury, Frome, and Warminster, and at Shepton Mallet, that the manufacture of English wool has greatly decreased?—It has.

What is the price of coals at Frome, Warminster, and Westbury, per ton?—At Frome it is from fifteen shillings to twenty shillings per ton; at Warminster and Westbury it is dearer, the carriage being above seven miles further.

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Where

Where are the coals supplied from to those places?—From Mendip.

Is that the nearest place of supply?—It is.

The witness was directed to withdraw.

No. VI.

HOUSE OF COMMONS,

Thursday, May 1, 1800.

Part of the DEBATE on the 6th RESOLUTION for
the UNION, in a Committee of the whole House.

Mr. PITT having moved the 6th Resolution,

Mr. Peel rose. Respecting the measure now before the Committee, I must repeat, in part, the opinion which I delivered last year, when I did myself the honour of addressing this House.—I have, however, to regret exceedingly that the Resolutions, now before us, assume a different shape from what I had reason to expect from the known candour of those with whom the Resolutions originated. I have heard
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the evidence given at your bar, respecting the woollen trade of this country.—I respect so much the feelings of others, that if I thought their supposed grievances would be removed without danger to the measure of the Union itself, I would say the Petitioners ought to be attended to, and I would say further, that I would wish them compleat success in the object they profess to have in view.—I feel for another description of persons also, and for another trade, in which I am deeply concerned, I mean the cotton manufactory of this kingdom, and the manufacturers of it.—We can, perhaps, boast an equality with the woollen manufactory in point of extent and utility; but it is far from being my intention, (which I say for the purpose of preventing any misunderstanding), to convey any idea that there is, between these two very important branches of the trade and manufactures of this country, any unfriendly rivalry: on the contrary, I am persuaded there is but one idea entertained by the members of both upon the subject of the general welfare of the empire. I have heard the evidence at the bar, as I have said already, and I must say, that the principal hostility of the Irish resolutions now before us, seem to be directed against, and are certainly calculated to affect,

that valuable branch of our trade, the calicoes and muslins of this country.

In the year 1785 I was at your bar, a petitioner, expressing a fear, that on the subject of cotton, the then projected intercourse with Ireland would interfere with the interests of this country, and that considerably, from the circumstance that the price of labour was lower in the one country than the other.—I have not changed my opinion upon that subject, and I have to regret that the prejudices of manufacturers, on both sides the water, have very much tended to cripple the Union in its progress: a measure which has my most hearty wish for its success, under a perfect persuasion that it is calculated, not to serve England only, but every branch of the British empire, and more particularly for the salvation of Ireland.—I have long viewed it, and do still view it, as a measure calculated to bring us together, and founded upon that most clear proposition, that both countries should have an identity of interest; that the advantages of this country should co-operate with the advantages of Ireland, and by which they may produce manufactures much cheaper than they did before. But I am sorry to say that certain prejudices, at which I have already hinted, have, in a great measure, stood

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in the way of that desirable end. The low price of labour in Ireland, is favourable to many works of the most solid kind, as well as those of genius and taste, and by a judicious disposal of which, the interests of both countries may be materially and most advantageously affected.—Ireland, however, has shewn herself afraid, in some measure, of opening an intercourse of the most liberal kind with this country; and, I fear that apprehension has been augmented by the expression of a gentleman who has long been, and still is, in a high station in Ireland; I mean Mr. Beresford, who I understood to have said, “that a weak neighbour, who is so very poor as to stand in need of protection, should take care of his rich one, lest, under the pretence of assistance, he should take away his little all.” This is what I always understood to be an illfounded jealousy with regard to the intentions of this country; and I cannot help thinking that propagating such a distrust, is like a poor man shutting his door and refusing to admit the visit of a rich good neighbour who came with intention to relieve him in the hour of need. Ireland is in a state that is comparatively poor and weak, and England is opulent and strong, both in her government and property. England stands in no
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need of assistance to insure her independence; Ireland does.—I did conceive, on that account, that Ireland would have been very glad to have forwarded an Union with England on circumstances of pure reciprocity and liberality of sentiment; but I should be wasting the time of the Committee if I pressed this topic any further. Ireland has a very valuable manufacture, and has free access to all its advantages on the part of England, and without that indulgence, she could not have that access; an indulgence, give me leave to say, our own manufacturers can hardly boast of, and which if they had, the trade of Ireland would, in some respects, be less valuable than it is; and for which value they are indebted to England's bounty.—They have a great trade of muslins, and yet they refuse that manufacture of ours without a duty of £.50 per cent. and which would justify a protecting duty of £.10 per cent. I do not complain of this because it operates materially against the interest of this country; but I do complain on account of there being a want of that good understanding which stops an intercourse between the two countries, on free and liberal terms, on account of this unjust prohibitory duty; and that the more especially when we were told by the right honourable
gentle-

gentleman who brought this subject before us, that the intercourse between the two countries was to be liberal and equitable, whereas the restricting clauses upon some of the subjects are likely to keep us separate from each other for at least twenty years. I persuaded myself at the onset of this business, that the plan would have been so carried on that English capital would soon have visited every corner of Ireland. I promised myself the pleasure of seeing, that where there is now a hut or a hovel, there would soon be a comfortable human habitation. I promised myself also the prospect of seeing, in a little time, that the agents of sedition should be disabled from alienating the affections of the people from government, under the cloak of religion. I did conceive, that France would no more entertain any hopes of disuniting that country than this, from its government; and that the contest or struggle between us would soon be changed from arms to arts.—Some of these things I still hope soon to see, but not all of them.—Am I then, under this state of things, to vote against the Union? Am I to vote against it, because I know the cotton trade to be hardly dealt by? Am I so displeased with the regulations of the muslin trade, that I must say the measure at large shall not
have

have my support? Sir, the measure itself is so important, that small considerations must not be allowed to weigh against it; yet I do conceive that the measure of the Union, even as now proposed, although giving to both our woollen and cotton by no means what is just or equitable, is such that, it is better we should agree to the terms now offered, rather than persist in measures that may be fatal to the great measure itself, and risk the possibility of Ireland becoming a province to France. It is on this ground that I support the measure, unfavourable as it is. I do likewise hope we shall long follow a line of conduct which I look upon as a very proper, though some gentlemen think it a very simple one—I mean that of proceeding to a considerable extent, in state affairs, upon confidence in his Majesty's ministers. I know that has been thought extremely wrong by some members of this House, but I own it has never yet appeared so to me—So far from it, that a system of confidence appears to me more rational than that of distrust. In the affairs of private life it is the general guide of our actions: I know not why it should be otherwise in the affairs of the public. If a friend of mine should shew his attachment to my interest, and solicitude for my comfort, in the hour
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of adversity, when I was abandoned by almost every body else, should I not be justified in continuing to confide in such a person? and, would there be any thing extravagant in my suffering myself to be guided by his opinion? I own there does not appear to me any thing to blame in such conduct. Now, for the application of this doctrine, I do say that the present administration are entitled to the favourable confidence of parliament and the public; it arises out of their conduct, and this, I think, must be apparent, when we consider the danger to which this nation was at one time exposed. We are indebted to administration for the close application with which they examined the state of this country, and the means whereby a timely end was put to the designs of our domestic enemies. We are indebted to them also for the wise course they pursued to restore public credit when it was in danger. We were, at one time, almost disheartened by the desertion of almost all our allies; at that time also, administration sustained the nation in a proper state of dignity, and even raised it to a pitch of eminence before unknown in the world. Upon these grounds I forbear to dwell on trivial sacrifices which this measure calls on this country to make, and am determined to support this resolution.

Mr.

Mr. *Wilberforce*. It was rather my wish, sir, after the ample discussion which this subject had undergone by the learned counsel for the petitioners, who delivered one of the most able speeches I ever heard at your bar, to have waited until other gentlemen had stated what in their minds, was the result of the evidence they had heard, in order that I might know where it was defective, and that I might, by such observations as might occur to me, endeavour to supply that defect; but I own I can do little more than repeat what the learned counsel stated in his speech in summing up the evidence to the committee. Indeed that speech comprehended every thing belonging to the subject so entirely, and was so ably delivered that I am not sure I should have said any thing at present on the resolution which is now before you, but that the speech of the honorable gentleman who spoke last has disposed me to say a few words, because some things were uttered in that speech, that were never before suggested on the question of the Union---I should however declare at the commencement of what I have to say, that from the conduct of the honorable gentleman who spoke last, it is manifest no man is more ready than he is, to support any measure for the public good, at
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the same time he will give me leave to say that after giving him entire credit for his patriotism, he is, on a case of this kind, rather a dangerous ally to us. He has indeed, from a profound judgment and the fair exertion of very superior talents risen to the highest degree of opulence and character in this country, so that every thing he utters in this house justly has great weight and considerable effect. But it is my business to address you, sir, on the behalf of men of another description, but on whose state and condition this country has a great stake; in whose welfare the whole of the community in which we live, is deeply interested; whose testimony, although not so affluent as the honorable gentleman, is entitled to the attention of this committee; and who, although not conspicuous characters in society, are nevertheless respectable for the diligence, patience, industry, and labour, by which they have supported themselves and families, and sustained the very great, though unavoidable burthens imposed upon them in order to support the state. These burthens they have supported, not only without a murmur, but with a chearfulness which does honour to their character, and entitles them to the protection of this House, as well as the respect of the whole country. I am sure the honorable gentleman, with that candour,

candour, of which no man has a larger share, will make this distinction ; that although these Resolutions may deeply affect a trade, in which he is deeply interested, and therefore it is highly creditable in him to forbear complaining, because he may think the good to be procured to the public will much outweigh the evil :— yet, that to these poor, honest, and laborious persons, of whom I am now speaking, the case is otherwise. Their all is at stake ; every thing that relates to themselves and their families is put to the utmost hazard by the Resolution which is now before the Committee ; and the point as it affects them, stands between comfort and absolute ruin ; and which of these shall be their lot, depends upon the vote which this Committee shall come to this night.

The honorable member opposite to me, seems to mistake the stage of our proceeding. We should, unless we knew otherwise, have conceived from the manner in which he spoke upon the subject, have supposed that the Speaker was now in the chair, and that the House was deliberating in the last stage, which the forms of proceeding allow to it ;—that the question was, whether we should agree or disagree to the proceedings of the Committee?—and that the matter had now, for the last time,

come

come before us in a mass. But we know the case is otherwise, that we are still in a Committee, in which any Resolution that is not yet voted, may be modified as to us shall seem meet; nor can I suppose that my right honourable friend [Mr. Pitt] would wish to bring forward any proposition, without allowing time sufficient for any alteration, which may appear, not indeed on light, but on weighty and important occasion, to require, and which, of course, should be disposed of only after a fair and deliberate consideration. Such alteration may be made without destruction to the principle on which the Union is not only professed, but on which we all feel it to be founded; and therefore, if I propose to alter the article which is now before us, I by no means declare myself hostile to the Union altogether; and if the Committee would pardon the allusion to so unimportant a subject, I would say, that I have spoken less upon the general measure of the Union than commonly falls to my share in the ordinary discussion of public affairs in this House. The measure which I have to propose, has no tendency to affect the general question of Union; all the other parts of it are different from this. All the material benefits of the Union would remain, although my proposition should be

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adopted.

adopted. What I shall propose would not affect them. It would be troubling the Committee, and wasting my own strength unnecessarily, to press this point. Every gentleman in this House, is entitled to credit in the first instance, for his statement of the tendency of any thing he is about to propose; nor is there any inconvenience in so doing, for the House must always judge for itself before it adopts any measure, and then any little occasional inaccuracy of statement, or sudden misconception of a matter, which create some difference of opinions between us, is buried for ever. I say this, because otherwise, part of what the honourable gentleman said, would convey an idea that I must either be against the Union, or vote for the Resolutions altogether, and that they are now so circumstanced, that they must be either adopted or rejected altogether. This I say, because he stated some reasons for thinking some of the Resolutions in themselves improper, but that he would not propose any alteration in them, because, he seemed to think that might have a bad effect on the Irish Parliament, and might tend to destroy the Union. I have been led to say thus much from what was stated by the honourable member who has just spoken, and I shall now recur to what I before hinted at;

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and although the matter itself seems to lie within a narrow compass, yet, could I impart to the Committee the feelings I have upon this occasion, they would, I am persuaded, excuse me, if I read to them a great part of the evidence which was given at your bar; but I trust every gentleman in this Committee has read it with attention: and I am certain, that when I touch on some particular parts of the evidence, the feelings of the Committee will go along with me, in a great measure; and where they do not, I hope that those parts will be stated wherein we may happen to differ. But before I proceed to that, I should say a word or two on what was stated just now by the honourable member, who has just preceded me in this debate. I cannot help thinking, that upon this subject of the Union, there seems to be creeping into the House, as it were, a disposition to think that it would be more liberal for us not to stand much upon that which constitutes our own interest or the interest of our constituents, but that we ought to consider the Union as a grand important measure, in the munificence and magnitude of which our own interests ought to be buried, or that the Union is a splendid object, in the view of which we should pass by, as unworthy of notice, any of the personal interests

of our constituents. To this way of considering the subject in any deliberative assembly, and above all in an assembly of the representatives of the people, I object; for besides the tendency it has to remind us of a maxim, which I am afraid is more remarkable for its truth than its urbanity, and was uttered by a man who is much celebrated for his acuteness and wit, [Dean Swift] “That there is nothing which men usually bear with more philosophical patience than the misfortunes of others;”—or that we may be considered like “generous church-wardens;” that is to say, liberal at the expence of others.—It is contrary to that which appears to me to be the very genius of representation, and must render us obnoxious to the satire of those who seek every where, and in every thing, an excuse or pretext for telling the people of England, that the idea of representation in Parliament, in its present practical effect, is a subject fit for ridicule.—I say, we shall be exposed to this sort of distorted figure of our proceedings, if, under any idea of magnificence, we should pass resolutions which shall afterwards be felt to have sacrificed the real and solid interests of a very great part of our constituents. I say, it is a principle interwoven into the policy of this country,

country, its laws, its very constitution are founded on it; and it makes part of the texture as it were of our whole system, that every individual in the community shall be considered as the guardian of his own rights and privileges; the protector and governor of his own property; and that he shall always, and every where, be allowed to assert and vindicate his title with effect. Therefore, when gentlemen tell me I should act with liberality in a case like this, I must tell them, they do not understand the principle on which our constitution is founded, nor the rights it protects, nor the liberty it nourishes, unless they allow their constituents leave to assert what they know, to express what they feel, and give them credit for understanding at least something of the trade by which they live, and for feeling something upon apprehension of the loss of every thing that is most dear to them in the society in which they live. I thought it necessary to say this, after what fell from an honourable member, to whom I have already so frequently alluded, and who has, by his speech to-night, given earnest of his readiness to forego great personal interest of his own, for what he says are, and no doubt conceives to be, the general interests of his country.—But in calling your attention to this

matter, I by no means conceive I am calling your attention to the partial interest of any body of men; but the ground on which I am asking your attention is, that those for whom I claim it, have an interest that is, as it were, no less extensive than the interest of the whole country.—I say it is so, from the nature of that interest; but in the view I have of it, it is not their interest merely, but the interest of the whole kingdom that is involved in the Resolution which is now before you. I say, it is for the general benefit of the empire at large, as well as for the benefit of those whom I have the honour of representing; nay, it is for the benefit of Ireland herself, that the measure which I am about to propose should be adopted: at least, that is the view I have of the subject.

I think considerable mistakes have been made concerning these propositions, at least out of this house. Many persons think this is a question of regulation merely; others think it is a question of repeal only of some old, and perhaps they may think, odious prohibition. Some of these are indeed points which regulate, and some which repeal prohibitions; but they are prohibitions that are not odious but salutary, and to a given extent, indispensable towards the well-being of the community in which we live. In the first place, what is the true state of the case?

case? what will be the real situation of things in regard to the condition of the British Empire if the resolutions pass as they stand now? As the law now stands, woollen yarn may be imported from Ireland into this country, but cannot be imported into Ireland from this country. This is a fundamental article of national policy, to work the raw material of wool at home, and not to allow such raw material to go abroad. But it is not merely sending wool to Ireland; it is also the protecting duty against our woollen goods going to Ireland, independant of the loss of the raw material, that I have to complain of: One of two principles ought at least to be observed,—Ireland should at least say this to us, If you give us your raw material, we will waive our protecting duty; if we are to be considered as one family, and but the inhabitants of one kingdom, whose interests are the same, why should Ireland have a protecting duty against the importation of the manufacture of Yorkshire any more than Derbyshire has?—On the other side they say, What better shall we be with your wool, without the means to work it up, which they say is, in other words, an encouragement to work it up, and which again they say is the protecting duty; they say that, “unless you

allow us the protecting duty as well as the wool, you do us no good." Now, upon the subject which is before us, I have thought a great deal, and I have never been able to change the impression which was made by it upon my mind. I have conversed with several intelligent people out of this house upon it, and there is not one man to whom I have stated it, that did not at once fall in precisely to my opinion, and continue so upon reflection; and who did not say, that the subject of the exportation of wool, and the protecting duty, as proposed at present, is perfectly unfair. I say it is so unfair, that it is impossible to defend it. You should have said: "Let each of the two countries keep its own raw material, or at least, if the raw material be allowed to go to Ireland, let the protecting duty be taken away; to possess both is enormous unfairness"—and here let me do justice to the sentiments of my own constituents: they would not desire that the protecting duty should be taken away unless it was proposed that English wool should be sent to Ireland; were that duty taken away, they would be able to overwhelm Ireland, but they desire no such thing; they ask only, that if the protecting duty is to continue, Ireland shall not be supplied with our raw material

terial to work up with. This I say must appear to the committee absolutely unjust, contrary to the opinion of every man I ever conversed with; I alledge it to be, and contrary it certainly is, also, to all the common rules of equity, justice, and fair-dealing. However, I should not trouble the house much at length upon this subject, if this were merely speculative injustice or theoretical inequality; but it is mixt with and compounded of, practical inconvenience and enormous loss, such as are likely to be followed by the utter ruin of those on whom it operates;—and I would say, that if we are once satisfied, that the practical effect of a measure is to work enormous injustice, it is then fair and perfectly reasonable to draw every argument against the false principle on which it is founded; because the principle, which without practical proof might perhaps be deemed theory, becomes demonstration when sanctioned by practice; the principle is then absolute and perfect, and the practical effects of it are to be deemed illustrations. So a principle which is a bad one in theory, may be said not to be so in practice; but if we find the practical effect of the principle to be bad, we may safely pronounce the principle itself to be bad also; and against such
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a principle, so proved to be bad, it is fair to argue even theoretically. And now I proceed to lay down a proposition; it is this: "That the petitioners against the exportation of wool have made out in evidence, that the kingdom of Great Britain now works all the wool which it produces, and that that which goes to Ireland, will diminish the manufacture of this country." That is the proposition which I state, and on which we differ: I say it is proved by the evidence given at your bar, that we now work all the wool which is produced in this country, and that if any goes to Ireland, it will lessen the manufacture of this country.— If that be so, and I say it is incontestably proved, it becomes this committee to consider for what reason it is that they will give away this most valuable raw material. I say it is worth while for the committee to consider whether this will be much for the interest of those who are to receive it: I conceive, speaking in a comprehensive sense, that the very contrary is the truth, and therefore it is on more grounds than one that I say this measure is most unwise. I have heard the opinion of Doctor Adam Smith alluded to upon this subject. That great authority undoubtedly states in substance, on
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the system of the wool law, “that suffering the raw material to go away, and induce men against their prejudices to turn their capital on industry, by any artificial mode, when it is capable of giving all an equal chance of the raw material on the one hand, and of working it up on the other, on fair and equitable terms, would be proper:” but it seems to me also, that if it be true that we now work up all the wool which this country can produce; it must then follow, that whatever Ireland can get from us, we use at least in an equal degree, and therefore it would be well for us to consider, even with a view only to the ultimate welfare of Ireland herself, whether we should thus try to enrich her at our own expence, and take away from ourselves certain advantages which we now enjoy, without being at all certain that we shall communicate to her any real advantage whatever. I conceive this to be a point on which it is proper for me to refer to the evidence; I shall, however, to save time, refer only to two or three parts of it, and then those who have heard or read it, will themselves recollect or refer to the rest. Mr. Husler, whose father was in business for sixty years, himself sixteen, tells you, that in the year 1793, wool
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fell from 7l. to 5l. from which time it has been gradually rising, until it has at last arrived at the price of 11l. 10s.—But it may not be improper that I should endeavour, as well as I am able, to anticipate the objections which are likely to be made to my sentiments on this subject: it has been stated, and probably will be stated again, that wool, like other articles of trade, will accommodate itself to the demand. This, as a general proposition, as to the articles of trade, is true, but like almost every other general proposition, it is subject to a multitude of qualifications and exceptions; and I say that from the nature of the case, this proposition, when applied to wool, becomes a mistaken proposition: indeed we are likely to be greatly misled by almost any propositions, whenever we attempt to apply them universally, and in none more so than upon the article in question, for wool is not to be considered merely as a raw material, but also as an appendage to other articles, and must be combined with them, and make a compound consideration. It is not like your fisheries or your corn, in which that article may be considered in a detached state, but must be blended with other considerations: thus for instance, when we consider wool we must consider

sider it in the encouragement to be given to its growth, as attached to the animal that produces it; so that if the farmer conceives it more to his interest to protect the flesh than the wool, you have no good security for the preservation of wool, and your proposition, "that an increase of the demand will produce an increase of supply," will fail, and will never begin to operate until the wool becomes an article of primary consideration, which at present is not the case, the wool, in comparison with the carcase of the animal not being above one to seven perhaps. For upon inquiry I find, that in the part of the country in which I live, the average price of the wool was some time ago taken at from 5*l.* to 6*l.* the pack. The carcase of the animal will weigh from 18 to 20 stone: now upon considering the price of the wool, even in its advanced state, it will appear to offer an encouragement to its cultivation but in a very slight degree, in comparison with that of the flesh of the animal, for although the advancement upon wool be from 3*l.* to 4*l.* per pack, yet this is next to nothing to the inducement of turning into profit the carcase of the animal:—The probability then is, that although indeed the sheep will be well fed, yet you will not have more
wool

wool, because the butcher will be induced to slaughter it at a given age, which will answer his purpose better than to keep it for the sake of the produce of the wool. I only mention this in passing, to shew that wool is not the primary article, but that it is connected with another article which determines it, and therefore that the general principle, "That an advance in the price of an article will tend to encourage its production," is inapplicable to the subject of wool; or in other words, "That an increased demand conduces to an increased supply." We all see its inapplicability to the article in question; but not to rely on general reasoning, we have this plain fact before us, that the price of wool has in fact been increasing greatly within these few years; what is the reason for this?—If the supply could in general keep pace with the demand, we should see that the deficiency would only be felt for a week or two, or perhaps a month, but that afterwards we should have plenty of wool as the demand increased; but all the witnesses prove the reverse of this supposition, for they all declare there never was so great a deficiency in the supply of the article of wool as at the present moment. Many of them have gone round the country,

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endeavouring in vain to get it: others have heard from their correspondents there is none to be got: others again have been obliged to give up their foreign orders for want of wool; one person, who had an order for 300 packs, could, after all his diligence to execute it, obtain only 70.—Now I would ask, do not these facts contradict and entirely overturn their application of the principle, that increased demand will produce an increased supply; for such is the statement of the evidence at your bar. However it may possibly be stated, and I conceive from some questions I heard put, it will be asked, how then do you account for the great increase of the manufacture of the article of cloth of Yorkshire? which by looking at the exports you will find has taken place, and this too at the very time when your witnesses have been saying that the wool was scarce, which we deny. How can you account for this, unless the quantity of wool has been enlarged? This occurred to me as a difficulty when I examined into the evidence; I wanted information on it, and I have obtained it; I will state my reasons for it presently. The great consideration to which I wish to call the attention of the committee is this: There was, some years ago, an application

application made to parliament by a part of the country in which the honourable gentleman who spoke last is considerably connected ; it was for permission to export wool, because there was at that time, three or four years produce of the commodity on hand, and the price was only from three to five pounds per pack. Now upon this subject I wish to call the attention of the committee to a part of the printed copy of the evidence which they will find in page 8 :—The witness was asked as to the quantity of wool on hand in the year 1784, over and above the produce of the year ? to which the witness answers, “ I have heard it stated as being nearly three years growth of combing wool.”—I will now state at once to the committee what I conceive to be the fact : it is this ; ever since that period the manufactures have been increasing, not at all in consequence of the product of each year, but gaining on the stock in hand each year more than at any former period. If I am right in my position, at that period there were three or four years stock in hand ; and it appears there never was any time in which the quantity actually in hand, was so low as it is at present ; for in point of fact, it has of late been used in a state in which it is less fit than it ought to be for the purposes of manufacture ; the manufacturers have not only been using all the

the accumulation of the past, but by taking wool before the period at which it is fit for use, they may be said to have been anticipating the future ; and if the committee will look into the matter, they will see that upon the quantity of cloth which was last year returned at Pomfret fessions, as milled it appears almost double to what, a good many years ago, used to appear ; and yet the quantity of wool this year is so low, that there is indeed not sufficient to work with. Now, taking the produce to be 600,000 packs, which was a calculation made without any view of answering the purpose for which I now use it, and indeed without any prospect of its being applicable to that purpose, and made by a man of as much sagacity, knowledge, and experience on this subject, as any that ever lived in this world, (Mr. Hustler the elder,) and taking it for truth also, that there was formerly a great accumulation of wool, but that it is now all worked up into manufacture, it appears that the increase of manufactured goods has not arisen from an increase in the product of the raw material, but from this accumulation.

Now, Sir, I do understand from other gentlemen, perfectly unconnected with this gentleman, there was a very large issue of paper from the country banks, which gave very great facility to those who purchased wool, so that large

portions of wool were purchased ; and although the order for cloth for the French army was the cause of purchasing a great quantity of wool in 1792, yet it was not sufficient to consume the produce of one year : it was only for two months, and it was supplied by two houses who purchased the one against the other, but this was not so great as to affect the produce of the year :—and if any doubt remained upon that subject, it would not be difficult to produce the accounts of these very gentlemen, if the committee should think proper to refer to them.

But there is another point which casts much light on the evidence of Mr. Hustler, and I think it is partly due to him that I should state it, which is, that before he gave in the correction to his evidence, the substance of it was included in what he said, as it appears in the 8th page of the printed copy of his examination, in answer to the question :—“ Since what year has there ceased to be any stock in hand, over and above the produce of the year ? ”—“ The quantity has gradually decreased since 1784.—In 1792, it was bought up from the farmers nearly as much as at present, but not consumed.” Now I beg leave to observe, that this answer comprehends in it the correction of this gentleman’s evidence the second day.—Another person engaged in the business of purchasing wool, states the same thing, as
appears

appears in the printed evidence, page 18. Mr. Lumb, of Wakefield, to the question, "Do you know whether at any period, during the last ten years, there has been a great quantity on hand, either with the staplers or the growers?" answers—"There was a good stock in the spring of 1793, but none since." Now I say, if any thing can confirm the evidence of the former witness, Mr. Hustler, it is that which I have just stated. But there is another proof which is in my power to afford to the committee; and I know no good reason why it should not be laid on your table. It relates to wool bought by Mr. Love in the year 1792, and by which it appears what the price of wool was, of the growth of Cambridge, Norfolk, and Suffolk, by which it appears manifestly, that the price of wool in the year 1792, which is the only year that has been attempted to be compared with the present, rose in consequence of speculation in that article. I should be glad to submit this account of the price of wool to any gentleman who would wish to make use of it, for it is material, and very useful evidence on the investigation of this business. I say, it is now manifest that all the arguments of a real scarcity in the year 1792 are done away, and therefore I may recur to the proposition I laid down early in my address to you, that ever since

the year 1784, the manufacture of woollen goods has been growing, and encroaching on the stock of wool in hand, which ought to be kept for the use of the manufacture of this country; and that “now the kingdom of Great Britain works all the wool which it produces, and that wool which goes to Ireland will diminish the manufacture of this country.”

Another subject of consideration is that of Spanish wool imported into this country, and which has been continually increasing; and upon this I also say, nothing appears to controvert my proposition, but much in support of it; and without considering this point attentively also, it will be impossible for the committee, or the house afterwards, to determine justly. It is not from an earlier period than the year 1791 that we have an account of the importation of Spanish wool into this country: it would have been desirable that we should have it from the year 1784, in order that we might compare the importation under different circumstances; for it usually happens, that when importation is great in one year, it is less in the next: last year it was greater than it was formerly; but from private information, on which I can venture to rely, I have been able to obtain an account of the quantity of Spanish wool imported into this country, by which it appears that the
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quantity has increased very much indeed, which is only another fact in support of my proposition, "That the manufactory of Great Britain is now more than equal to its wool," and therefore "That none of that wool can be exported without manifest injury to that manufacture." I do not know that it is necessary for me to add any thing more to this part of the argument; and I say this the rather, because I do not know what objections can be urged against it: and if any are made, I trust that other gentlemen will answer them. But while I am on this subject, I will take notice of a point which may be urged. Perhaps some gentlemen will say, that the idea of our losing the advantages we now enjoy from our woollen manufactory, is nothing but an ill-founded jealousy. That my apprehension of Ireland running away with any of our manufacture is merely chimerical. To which I would answer in the first place, that an arrangement that is in itself unjust, and which is founded on a false principle, ought not, upon speculative ideas that it will produce no practical mischiefs, to be countenanced in the House of Commons, under any pretence; and still less if a great number of men whose characters are pure; whose intelligence is of the first rate, and whose pursuits are of the first utility to the opulence of the country in which they live, are decidedly

against it, as injurious to their interest.—But I should wish to close upon this argument, and see where the truth stands, and how it bears.—I would ask what has given to our manufactures of woollen goods the superiority they have, especially to that part of the kingdom to which I have frequently alluded?—It is not owing solely to the industry of the inhabitants of that country, of which, however, no people upon earth, I believe, have a larger share ; nor is it wholly owing to their skill, in which no body of men, I believe, ever could excel them ; it is not wholly owing to the valuable machinery which they use, an invention which, I believe, was never surpassed by any effort of human contrivance ; but it is owing to all these things combined together, with the energy of the English character acting under the protecting genius of the English constitution, under the salutary provisions of a Legislature, whose wisdom has, with a few interruptions, secured to us, from age to age, the sole use of the raw materials, of which our manufactures are composed, and that of wool most emphatically. Look to Ireland, and there you will see they have not been able to equal us in the article of woollen goods. Why so?—Because they have not had the same quantity of wool of their own to work with as we have. But the question is not merely whether
wool

wool shall be imported into Ireland or not; it is, whether France shall work manufactures with our wool. That would partly be the effect of allowing this importation of wool to Ireland: at least it is so apprehended. Far be it from me to look with jealousy on the prosperity of Ireland; no man wishes to her more good fortune than I do, but I do not see why I should consent to impoverish this country in order to enrich Ireland. In point of fact, the wollen manufacture of Ireland has received indeed encouragement, and countenance, and assistance in Ireland; whereas ours has grown up as the natural production of our soil: and all that we ask now is, that you should not injure that soil. We ask no bounty, or any sort of encouragement, but that you should not at once put an end to our trade, by taking away the materials of which it is composed, and deliver it over at once to another country. But one of the most important arguments that weigh on my mind is this:—Notwithstanding the Irish protecting duty, we do export and send thither 600,000*l.* worth a year of cloth; and this shews that the manufactures of this country are able to make their way under considerable disadvantages; but the exportation of the raw material will be most dangerously injurious to this part of the trade of this country, and highly so to those for whose

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interest I am now contending: for while we have our own wool to ourselves, we can stand up against the Irish protecting duty, but when the raw material is taken away from us, and given to Ireland, then the Irish protecting duty will begin to operate; and if you adopt the resolution which is now before you, the truth of what I am now saying will be manifest, when it is too late to prevent the mischief.

I have now, sir, answered, as well as I was able, the principal objections offered, or likely to be offered against my statement, that those for whom I am arguing, will be materially affected by the measure which is now before you.—That manufacturers have sometimes entertained groundless fears and exaggerated apprehensions, I admit; but that is no reason why this committee should take a step which may ruin so large a branch of our manufacture, especially when they know that when once the step is taken, there can be no means of retrieving our condition. This is a point on which parliament should be extremely cautious, seeing in what dangers we may be involved.

I have stated reasons for believing that the Irish will derive advantages over us, if this article should take place; but there are other points so obtrusive as to press upon the mind of every man who examines this subject with the
least

least attention : in the first place, the article of wool is dearer at present in Ireland than it is in England ; this is stated by a witness who is a great dealer in wool, and this is corroborated by a man of considerable talents and celebrity, who is no friend to the side of the argument which I am now taking, and therefore I cannot take testimony that is less liable to objection. The gentleman I allude to is Mr. Arthur Young, and he says the price of wool is higher in Ireland than it is in England. Some years ago the manufacturers migrated from the West of England to Yorkshire, happily I hope for themselves and for the part of the country into which they came ; but this arose out of the advantage which was derived from the use of machinery, for in various instances machinery not only abridges labour, but also supplies the place of skill. By it, women and children can now perform that, which before its use, required great skill of men ; which reminds me of what I heard stated some time ago by an honourable friend of mine, that a person in this town had contrived a machine, which by mere dint of brute force would produce the effect of that which before required the talents of skilful men to execute.

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In the next place what are we to say to the subject of taxes,—will not taxes press more hardly on the people of this country than on those of Ireland?—This is a topic on which it is painful for me to speak, but the cause of truth requires it:—So long as men shall enjoy the protection of the legislature, they will not grudge what they are to pay to support the state under which they live, and indeed many individuals have made many personal sacrifices for the public good; none are more forward in that respect than those for whom I am now contending. I believe the tax on income was suggested at a public meeting of my constituents, there being in that part of the world, many who were not satisfied that they should enjoy all their wealth, without being made to bear a proportionable part of the publick burthens. But will they be induced to make any more such offers? will they be able to pay what they are now assessed, if you take away from them the raw material by which they have made up their manufactures, and which was the life and spirit of their trade? they cannot do so if you seal up the article by which they live, and expose them to the danger of being underfold in the market, and therefore ruined. Indeed I think
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you ought to be very sure you will not injure this industrious and valuable class of men before you pass this irrevocable decree.

I cannot help here taking notice of another subject; it is the increase of the poor rates. In Ireland they pay no poor rates: let these two things be considered together. Now those who complain of this resolution, pay more towards the taxes of the state, as they have less to pay of the poor rates; but if you take away the ground work on which they rose into importance in the state, which is wool, you will reduce many of them into a condition to take from, instead of contributing to, the poor rates: in such a situation, it will be natural for them to look to that part of the world where they will not have the same burthen to bear, and because Ireland will become that place, for in fact there is no poor rate whatever there; they will be led to go thence, to the inexpressible loss of this country. I do not know it is necessary for me to state all the peculiar advantages of Ireland, in carrying on the woollen manufactory: surely it is not necessary to say more upon that subject than that you are now going to give to Ireland other advantages to which they have no natural claim. Let me now ask for what end this is to be done? what particular object have you to answer by this alteration of the law of your country?

country?—I appeal to the honourable gentleman opposite to me, who spoke last, what is the great change and the great advantage to be expected by the union?—I would ask him, whether the grand object of it is not, that the two legislatures should be united in one incorporated union?—That they shall be so blended together, that there shall thenceforward never arise any difference of sentiment, as we have unhappily seen, between the two great councils of the nation; this is the great object of the union, and a glorious one it is; but is there any man who will say that the importation of wool has any thing to do with that idea?—Last year it was not included in the contemplation of either party, at least it is so reported in the speech of Mr. Foster, the speaker of the Irish house of commons. It was not intended in the arrangement of 1785, although every thing that was fit for her to enjoy was then supposed to be agreed to: it was not formerly, at any time, thought fit that this should be one of the number of the advantages which Ireland should enjoy: and here, I think, I have a right to complain of the injury which is likely to be done to the manufactory of this country. It is admitted that it will have that effect, and stated in almost these words, by Lord Castlereagh, in his address to the assembly of which he is a member;

member ; it was an address to the Irish legislature, not intended for us, but we have a right to look at the drift of it, now it is before us : he extols the union, and says, that formerly there was a jealousy of manufacturers of Great Britain, which prevented Ireland from having the wool of Great Britain, but he says now those jealousies are overcome, and the Irish are to have the wool, upon the advantages of which, he expatiates very ably. Some gentlemen have said that no jealousy was entertained : I do not know from what authority that assertion comes, but this I know, I never gave any such opinion, nor have I ever heard any of my constituents, who are most materially interested in the matter, give any such opinion ; I say I have some reason to complain that this is treated as no disadvantage to Great Britain ; when Lord Castlereagh plainly implies by his speech, that he felt the English manufacturers ought to be jealous : he says, however, that such jealousy is now at an end ; and therefore Lord Castlereagh, upon his own principle, since that jealousy has appeared, ought to desist from this measure altogether. After all, I really do not see any real and permanent advantage, considered as a member of one great empire, which Ireland will have, at least she can have none but that which we shall lose, for we now work up all the
wool

wool we produce; consequently Ireland can have nothing by the importation of our wool, but what is lost to our manufacture. Here then let me ask, are all the channels of national industry filled up and choaked, all the subjects of national favour so disposed of, that we cannot benefit Ireland but by something that shall be an injury to ourselves? is it necessary for you to try to help the Irish manufactories by ruining a considerable part of your own?—I cannot help thinking that Ireland would not stand on this, but would endeavour to find out other channels for her capital, if you were not to tempt her with this offer, especially when she came to learn, as the truth will turn out to be, that this measure will injure you in a much greater degree than it can possibly benefit her. What the particular or really permanent advantage is to be to Ireland from this measure, I really cannot anticipate: I cannot say that after all Ireland will have a single man more employed, or a single guinea more capital than she would have without this measure.

Will it be said, that after this Union Ireland will be made, as it were, part of the same kingdom, and that after the Union, Ireland should be considered as a British county?—I am sure this will not be insisted upon, or if it is stated, it will be confounding things that are in themselves

themselves very distinct; many points of an hundred thousand times more importance to Ireland than this are observed, by which the two countries are, for the period of twenty years, at the end of which they are all to cease, to be kept not only distinct, but, as it were, asunder. This was so ably stated by the learned counsel at your bar, that if I were sure that every gentleman who now hears me, heard him, I do not know that I should take notice of it at all, for I can have no hope of doing any better than to repeat his observations, in worse language and inferior delivery.—What are your protecting duties? Do they not, from their very name, imply a difference between the two countries? Do not the circumstances of difference in the taxes imply a great difference also in the two nations? Now see what effect this consideration must have? Consider the circumstance of one hundred members sitting in this house, who do not subject either themselves or their constituents to the burthens and regulations to which the people of this country must submit; I do not mention it invidiously, I know that while they are conscious they are protected, they will submit to burthens and regulations, and submit chearfully to them. But is not this a great difference? most undoubtedly it is, and it arises from the different
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ability of the two countries : but if this difference must exist in so many striking instances, why do you aim at abstract theoretical perfection in this single instance, in this one article, which, if it must be observed, will be productive of the ruin of a multitude of as good subjects as any in his Majesty's dominions. This article of wool, it should be observed, produces nineteen or twenty millions sterling a year ; is not that of importance enough to call for your cautious attention at least ; if other articles are governed by practical regulations, why should not this be so ? I ask nothing but that you should not break the principle of the Union, which is practical use and expediency, to the detriment of the wool trade. I only ask for an adherence to the plain, common, ordinary rule and principle of justice and equity, which are, that you should not direct the people of this country to give up their raw material, and allow a continuance of the Irish protecting duty both together.

There are two or three other topics to which I must allude, and call your attention. I am not able to express how much I feel, and I am sure the committee must feel, for the interest of those for whom I am contending ; so that I am aware the committee will not think their time lost, while they attend to what I shall
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further, as briefly as I can, submit to their consideration.

The next thing to which I would call the attention of the Committee, relates to a compact which took place between the two countries, concerning the linen and the woollen manufactories.—I should call the attention of the Committee to the transactions of Parliament at that time.—In the time of king William the Third, a very narrow policy, which no man would condemn more than I would myself, if I were sure it could safely be avoided, prevailed.—But this was part of the conduct of those great men of that day, who saved this country at the time of the Revolution. The state of Ireland was such, at that time, that it was thought necessary to treat it as a conquered country.—However, at that period, it appears there were several messages from the Throne to the Houses of Parliament, both in this country and in Ireland, concerning the linen and the woollen manufactory, and it was stated, at that time, that the two kingdoms should follow each its own proper bent; that is to say, that we should cultivate the woollen and Ireland the linen. The language of this country to Ireland at that was, “ Give us the woollen and do you take the linen.” Now I would read part of the Address of the Houses of Parliament to
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the Throne, if that were necessary, but it may be read hereafter, if any gentleman should wish to hear it. I shall only observe that in consequence of this, certain regulations followed, which tended not to protect merely the woollen manufactory of this country, for that was out of the question, but to keep back the woollen manufacture of Ireland, while they encouraged the manufacture of linen there. There was, amongst other regulations of a discouraging nature, imposed, twenty shillings a yard on the imported woollen cloth of Ireland, which was afterwards repealed; but there was another regulation, that Ireland should not import wool in raw material to any country but this.—So much for the policy of those days, which I state only to shew the feeling which this country had for its woollen manufacture. To come to our own times, I would ask whether this country has not been extremely solicitous to protect the linen trade of Ireland, and to encourage it? and whether it does not most handsomely contribute to that end? We have now a duty of £33. per cent. on linen imported from Germany.—You will find this stated by my Lord Aukland, who says, that this operating as a prohibition of linen from Germany for the purpose of giving preference to Irish linen, costs you £700,000 a year; and Lord Castlereagh
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states it at a million, that is, in other words; you pay so much more for linen than you had need to do, or you forego a duty to that amount. Now who are they who have been paying this duty?—Why, the very men on whose behalf I am now speaking, and they are now called upon to relinquish the consideration for which they have been so paying, and this is used by Lord Castlereagh in Ireland as an inducement, and so it certainly is partially speaking, to the people of Ireland to agree to the Union, by putting them in possession of both parts of the compact of king William the Third, namely to have their bounty upon linen, and to have also the raw material of this country for the woollen manufactory of that, without allowing to us any benefit whatever to meet this favour. I should like to be told, what reason there is for this.—I should like to know what would be thought of this if it were a transaction in private life? Suppose a particular person gave another a certain sum of money for a certain privilege, and suppose a superior power came and said, “you must continue to pay your money, but you must give up the object for which you paid it?” who could doubt of the profligacy of such an assertion? and yet, so it is in the present case, and the only difference between the two points is,

that that case would affect an individual only, and this affects a multitude of individuals.—I am sure that if I have an incorrect view of this matter, I should be happy to be set right, but that is the view I have of it—and this shews the radical injustice of the measure. I say that the persons for whom I am now contending have paid their share of this million a year; and will the people of Ireland agree, upon the Union, to return to them their share? Not at all, they are to continue to pay, and the consideration for which they have paid is not only to be taken away from them, but also the means by which they have hitherto been enabled to make their payments, are to be taken away also. I am perfectly convinced that if the view I have taken of this matter be correct, it is the most unjust that can possibly be conceived. There can be no doubt what would be the decision of a court of justice, or of equity upon such a case, if it came before them, and I know of no rule that can excuse this Committee, or the Legislature collectively, for departing from the obvious principles of equity and justice.

There is another point of considerable moment.—The Petitioners on whose behalf I am contending, wish the projected Union to take place, in which I agree with them, and I should
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from the general confidence I have in government, like to consider Ireland as a part of this kingdom; but yet I have not that sort of love for Ireland which would make me wish to see the manufacturers of this country go thither, and plant their children there, because the Union had made it ineligible for them to remain here.—Here is a capital funk in this country to the amount of five millions sterling, and will you leave the owners of it liable to all the inequalities and disadvantages which must follow the adoption of the resolution which is now before you?—Will you make them liable to the payment of a valuable consideration after they are dispossessed of the advantage for which they gave it.—Such is indeed the case of my constituents, and your petitioners.—Is it then without reason that I call on you to keep up the faith of parliament, which has, I say, pledged its honour to continue to the petitioners, the privilege, if it can be called so, of preserving their own property; for I say parliament the moment it does any act by which it recognises the claims of any body of men, stands pledged to protect such claims. Now I would ask, whether parliament has ever recognised the right of the subjects of this country, to keep the raw material here?—Certainly it has repeatedly, and that in the most solemn manner.

Have not the subjects of this country a right to call the payment of one million annually for the encouragement to the Irish linen, a compact by which there is secured to them the enjoyment of the advantage arising from keeping the raw material of wool in this country? Certainly they have. Has not parliament, by its numerous enactments, on this subject, taken away almost entirely, all idea of any alteration? No doubt in the mind of any honest man they have.—And now give me leave to say, that this breach of parliamentary faith, for it is no less, in breaking the compact between the two countries upon the linen and woollen trades, is a surprise upon many of my constituents who have laid out their capital upon an idea of the inviolability of it, so much so, that they repent of what they have done, and would gladly undo it, but that is now impossible.

I have but one or two more topics to touch upon, in the investigation of this subject.—One of them was pressed a good deal at the bar, but I own I do not assign as much weight to it as the petitioners do, although it is by no means undeserving of notice: at least I think it is an evil of which we should not incur the risk, without a probable benefit.—I mean the danger there is, that by allowing our wool to go to Ireland, it may go to France, that is, that
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it may be carried from Ireland to France, or it may be reshiped to this country, and then smuggled to France. I believe a considerable quantity has, by these means, found its way to France; however this is a consideration to which I do not assign much danger, and yet it is something.

Another article is that of freight, the freight of the article to Ireland would be considerably less than from the place of purchase to many of the manufacturing districts of this country.—Why do I say these things? not that I grudge to Ireland any of her advantages, but to shew that there is no occasion to tempt her with any artificial advantages, or to take her away from the consideration of her natural advantages.—And this leads me to another topic on which it is impossible for me to forbear saying a word or two.—Unquestionably the degree of apprehension and alarm which this article has occasioned, exceeds, by far, every thing that I ever heard of, for it is considered as no less than the extinction of the natural rights, as well as the wealth of those who have petitioned against it. I hope their fears are groundless, but I cannot conceive that so many men of sound understandings, of great commercial experience, of uncommon sagacity; whose
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minds are emancipated from the narrow views which attends commerce on a small scale, would participate in any fear of this sort, if it was a measure to free from blame, or so faultless as some seem to imagine; and I remember a speech made by my right honourable friend (Mr. Pitt), in which he said, that if any considerable alarm was likely to arise, that would be a reason for not pressing it.—Now, I say, that men of the best understandings, of the largest comprehensions, whose judgments, on any commercial point, any man would be disposed to follow or agree to, all, to a man, say, that this proposed exportation will be destructive to the woollen manufacture of this country.

I will now state to the Committee another point, which I am sure it will attend to in a very serious and deliberate manner.—Much, and highly, as I may often have delighted in seeing the effect of the commercial prosperity of this country; yet viewing it in the light I do, and convinced, as I am, that the religion of the country is the best security for its prosperity, I cannot help saying it is a drawback upon it, to observe that as manufactures increase, there is, generally speaking, a proportionable deterioration in the morals of the people; and here I must

must be allowed to put in a claim for the manufacturers of wool, for whom I am now contending.—Not from its importance or its millions of annual produce, but because in addition to all this commercial prosperity, of which it is the parent; it is a manufacture carried on with more regard to morals, and from the very nature and principles of it, diffusing more virtue and independence than any other manufacture in Great Britain.—The great way in which it is carried on is this: Each individual works up the article on which he is employed, at home with his wife and family, and when finished, carries it to market, as a farmer does his butter, or any other article, and, like the farmer, comes home to his family with the produce of it.—This is a manufacture in which you have the virtuous mind, the simple manner, and the wholesome flesh and blood which give to the heart of man courage and independence, which is the parent of true liberty and happiness in a social state.—Blessings which they will continue to enjoy, and even to improve, if you continue to them the means of so doing.—But would it be conducted in Ireland on the same principle? or rather would it not be conducted on different principles? would not property go over in large capitals, and so
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change the course of life of the manufacturers? —That would still be respectable, indeed nothing could be more so, except the other.—— This is a point I must leave to the feelings of the Committee, as having endeavoured but imperfectly to delineate a part of it.

I have but one word more, which is, to desire of you, not to do an irreparable injury : you may repent it even for Ireland, as well as for this country, in a permanent point of view. You leave ten thousand other points of infinitely more importance in a national view than this : it is only from a vain idea, of which I have a right to complain, that you entertain this attempt at perfection in the abstract in this particular ; it is like endeavouring to make part of a bad road as smooth and level as a bowling green, while you leave the main body of it, over which the multitude is to travel, full of furrows, large indentures, abrupt banks, and cavities. If it could be shewn that you do not work what you actually grow of wool, then perhaps this measure would be right, but so far is that from being so, that you actually have too little wool to supply the wants of your own manufacture. I should not wish to stand up and say that Ireland should not have a share ; I
would

would have her take a share as a sister, but I cannot consent that she should rob us of what is our own, and what we cannot spare. Consider what it is to disquiet this people of loyalty and virtue: consider that they may, at any time hereafter, grant to Ireland that, the asking for which now alarms them. Be cautious, I pray, lest you have before you, as the melancholy effect of your own work, the spectacle of a fallen state: it may be said we have wool to spare, but why do you force this measure before you are assured of the truth of that assertion?—Let me conjure you therefore, not finally and upon abstract principles of theoretical perfection, to sacrifice wantonly, the interests of so important and so worthy a class of his majesty's subjects as those for whom I am now contending are, and confessed to be.

Undoubtedly the alteration I have to propose is by no means to continue to us the enjoyment of all we are entitled to by law: I wish to treat Ireland with liberality and kindness, but I do not wish to give to her, what, to her, would be little to gain, but what, to us, will be much to loose; a loss, and a great one, to the nation itself, and as such, that which Ireland herself is deeply interested in preserving—for if there
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be three millions of persons concerned in the trade, is not Ireland interested in preserving, in full health and vigour, that branch of the British empire, rather than sacrifice it to a little wool. All that I desire, and those for whom I am arguing desire, is, not to leave the thing as it has been hitherto standing, but that they should give one-half of the compact which they enjoy; and which I say they have, by law and justice, a right to claim. They no longer wish that Irish wool should be imported into this country: but rather than they would allow wool to go out of this country, they will pay the million a year as they have done, for the encouragement and support of the Irish linen trade; and they are willing that each country should work as much foreign wool as they can obtain; and as to the protecting duties, they will allow them to continue; they wish to see Ireland rising into opulence, but not upon the ruin of this country.

One word more, Sir; an additional reason which I forgot:—Who can see what the effect may be of peace, when that happy moment shall arrive? I have heard it doubted, by able men, whether our exports will then continue to be as large as they are now; it is a subject on
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which I should not venture to give an opinion, but I think it is consideration enough to make this committee pause before they make a change of this kind. We shall certainly have less Spanish wool after the war, because then France will be likely to divide that article with us. These are additional reasons for the committee's pausing awhile at least, upon this subject: whatever we do on such a matter as this is, we should do deliberately: if the fears of the petitioners are groundless and exaggerated, the fact will appear, they will then no longer be entertained, and there will be no harm done; but the consequences of precipitation may be dreadful.—The proposition I have to make is in substance, to leave out of the resolution what relates to suffering wool to be exported from this country, meaning that arrangement should be as I have already stated, and that the Irish should be allowed to work up the wool which they themselves grow.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer.—Sir, I perfectly understand the nature of the amendment proposed to be moved by my honourable friend. The grounds on which my honourable friend makes his proposition, appear to me to be principally two; the one is, that the produce of the wool in this country is limited, and incapable

capable of increase; the other, that if this exportation to Ireland should take place, it must be considered as so much diminution of our own manufacture.

Now, warmly as I feel for the Union; warmly as I feel for the liberal principles of the commercial intercourse which ought to subsist between us, and which ought as speedily as possible to be carried into effect; still I would not support this resolution if I thought it had the tendency stated by him. But, notwithstanding the very able and eloquent manner in which my honourable friend has argued this question, I certainly have not in the least altered the sentiments I originally formed upon this important subject. However warmly I might feel in favour of the liberal principle which ought to exist in the event of an incorporate Union between the two countries, viz. that there should be a free commercial intercourse between them, and however anxious I am for the application of that principle, still if I were convinced, either by the evidence that was adduced at the bar, or by the speech of my honourable friend, that there was any reasonable ground for apprehending those consequences that had been predicted;—if there were any reason to apprehend that they would be, I will not say ruinous, but even detrimental

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tal to that great limb of the prosperity of Great Britain, I mean the woollen manufacture, I certainly would not hesitate to deviate from that principle, of the propriety of the adoption of which I am now so firmly convinced. But as I am by no means convinced, either by the evidence or by the arguments, I hope the Committee will indulge me in hearing the reasons for still retaining the opinion I originally formed. After the most mature consideration, after the most minute investigation which I had been able to make upon the subject, I was satisfied that to permit the exportation of the raw material to Ireland, might gradually, and in course of time, be productive of advantage to Ireland; but that it could not, even upon the principles laid down by the petitioners themselves, be productive of the least mischief to the manufacturers of England. By the adoption of the present article, they are doing that which in my view of the subject may tend greatly to the advantage of Ireland; but considered as a sacrifice on the part of England would be trifling, and on the part of the manufacturers, nothing. If the views which I have taken of this subject be correct, I shall be able to prove that any transfer of any manufacture, which the adoption of this article might be supposed to make to Ireland, would not make
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any void, which would not be much more than filled up by the great and unprecedented increase of our trade in this article. If the effect of permitting the exportation of the raw material to Ireland, should be as has been stated, that of transferring any portion of manufacture to Ireland, it would only be gradually, and in the course of a great number of years. For this reason I shall be under the necessity of entreating the Committee to take a more distinct view than perhaps they have hitherto done, of the probable consequences of the adoption of this article; or at least of that part of it which relates to the exportation of wool; and to which the arguments urged by my honourable friend are directed. I beg leave to remark, that some of his objections were not only inconsistent with, but contradictory to each other. In one part of his speech, my honorable friend had contended against permitting the exportation of wool to Ireland, because the effect of it would be to transfer the whole of the manufacture to Ireland; and in another part he objected to it, because he said it would be highly injurious to England, without being productive of any great advantage to Ireland. The Committee,

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and my honorable friend must see, that both these arguments cannot be founded, because in the question of the transfer of a manufacture, it was impossible (supposing the demand to continue, which was not doubted), that England should loose without Ireland gaining exactly in the same proportion. In order to form a correct estimate how far this manufacture can be the subject of transfer, and how far this article can have a tendency that way, it will be necessary to consider in what markets Ireland could rival us. There are but three markets in which they could rival us; in her own, by applying so much as was necessary for her own consumption, in foreign markets, or in our own market. I will not contend that the effect of the adoption of this article will not be in time, and by gradual progress to enable Ireland to supply her own market, and consequently diminish our manufacture by so much as we now supply for the consumption of that kingdom. I will even admit that in course of time Ireland might, in some branches of her manufacture, be able to meet perhaps, or even obtain a preference over us in foreign markets, but that she should be able to meet us in our own markets, I contend must be obviously impossible.

possible. It was proved to be so by the arguments of the counsel at the bar, by the evidence of the witnesses, and even by what had fallen from my honorable friend himself. My honorable friend has advanced as an objection to the proposed regulation, that it was unequal, because it permitted the exports of the raw material to Ireland, while it established protecting duties upon the manufacture. Now if the manufacturers were of opinion that it would be advantageous to them to suffer the Irish to send over their manufactures to England, free of duty, after we had permitted the exportation of our raw material free, it is clear that they must be of opinion that the manufacture must be still cheaper and better in England, and that they entertained no apprehension of Ireland beating us in our own market, because they otherwise must be anxious for the existence of a protecting duty. I have already admitted that there might be some articles of manufacture, which, as industry must always find its level, might in time be distributed, some in one country and some in another; but the objection which had been made to the continuance of the protecting duty upon the manufacture, shewed that the manufacturers of this

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country were of opinion, that they would be still able to beat Ireland, even after she was furnished with the raw material necessary for the manufacture. Now with respect to the manufacture furnished by this country to Ireland, it amounted upon an average to about 6 or 700,000l. a year. In the last year it amounted to about 900,000l. but this encreased demand was considered as arising from temporary causes. Now I beg of the Committee to compare this supply with which we furnished Ireland, amounting, as had been stated, to 6 or 700,000l. a year, with the whole of the manufacture of this country, both for its home consumption and for the supply of the foreign markets; and it will be found that the whole of the exportation to Ireland did not amount to above one-thirtieth part of our whole manufacture. I beg they would also compare it with the account which was given at the bar, of the increase which has taken place in the last year or two, in our manufacture. This increase was stated to amount from one million to one million and a half a year, so that the amount of what we sent to Ireland, appears to be about one-thirtieth of our whole manufacture, and little more than one-third of the increase which had recently taken place in it.

I do not believe that my honorable friend, or any gentleman, would state as a general proposition, that each part of an united kingdom should not have an equal chance of procuring the raw material for the purpose of manufacture, which was the produce of the whole of that kingdom; and it is clear, that should they procure that raw material, and be able to manufacture it, so as to supply their own market, it would not amount to above one-third of the increase which we are making every year. After this statement, it would be impossible for any gentleman to contend that this is a question about ruining the great manufacture of England; of giving a shock to the great capital that is vested in it; of turning the persons occupied in it out of employment; and consequently of increasing the poor rates. The utmost that could be urged was, not that our manufacture would be diminished, but that the rapid increase that we were making might in a small degree be retarded; that our increase, though great, would not be quite so great as if we kept the Irish market.

With regard to the question, whether the demand for this manufacture would continue to increase, I believe some difference of opinion exists.

exists. Some persons are of opinion, that the demand will probably diminish on the conclusion of a peace. I have on other occasions stated my reasons for thinking that in the event of a peace, a great increase would take place in the whole of our commerce. But the Committee had not my opinion alone upon this subject; they had also the evidence of the witnesses who were examined themselves; for they have stated, as a reason against permitting the exportation of the raw material, the probability of an increased demand for the manufactures on the termination of the war. The question then resolves itself into this, viz. Whether, with our manufactures in a state of unprecedented prosperity, which had increased and was likely to increase, we should not consent to communicate a part of our advantages to a kingdom, with whom we were about to effect a complete Union?—The next question was with respect to the propriety on which this article was founded, viz. the propriety of permitting the free communication of a raw material from one part of an united kingdom to another. As a general principle, this has not been denied; but my honorable friend has stated that it is applied only to this article of

wool. This statement was not correct, for the principle was not applied to the article of wool alone. The policy which governed all these articles, was to make the intercourse between the two countries, with respect to raw materials, and the whole of the trade between the united kingdoms, as free as possible. It was found to be impossible, under all the circumstances of the case, to carry this principle into full effect; but every effort had been used to make the exceptions to it as few in their number, as small in their extent, and as short in their duration as possible. The ground upon which these exceptions were admitted, was to prevent any sudden shock to capital vested in trade, which might arise from the permission of an immediate and complete freedom of intercourse between the two countries. It was upon this ground that I stated upon a former night, that although on the first view of the subject, it might be natural to suppose that in the event of an Union it would be desirable that each country should be permitted to manufacture that which it found most convenient; yet that could not be carried to its full extent, because, such a sudden freedom of intercourse might, in particular cases, injure the capital vested

vested in particular manufactures. But though the necessity of some temporary restraint was clear, as applied to manufactures, it was by no means so when applied to the raw material. Now with respect to the general equity of this principle, as to its effect upon the manufactures, it had been considered as a doubtful question, whether admitting the free exportation of wool from this to other countries, would not be beneficial to the landed interest, and to the commercial interest. Upon this point, I wish to give no opinion, though it was one in favor of which much might be said; but when I see that the manufactures of this country have arisen to such an unprecedented state of prosperity, by the adoption of a contrary system, I certainly would not, upon any speculative reasoning, consent to disturb it, as far as related to foreign countries. If, however, it be a doubtful point, whether the free exportation of our wool would not be advantageous to our manufactures, could it be contended that it was clear, they would be ruined by permitting its exportation to Ireland? Had it been found so in the case of Scotland? Had she ruined our manufactures, and transferred them to herself? Undoubtedly not. And yet at the time of the Union with that country, her taxes were considerably lighter than those of England, and

are so yet. What was the effect of permitting the free communication of the raw material with Scotland?—Why among other sources from which she obtained that article, Scotland was one; and the woollen manufacture of Scotland is only of the coarsest and cheapest sort.

I beg now to consider this question as it relates to the three markets in which, as I before stated, Ireland can by any possibility rival this country; and to the possibility of Ireland beating us in them, in consequence of our permitting the exportation of the raw material. The first consideration will apply to the comparative price of the raw material in the two countries; in order to consider how far, by permitting Ireland to import it, she might beat you in the foreign markets. Do those gentlemen who predict the ruin of our manufactures take into their consideration the wealth of Ireland as compared to that of England, when they talk of her out-bidding us in our own markets?—Surely they do not. She might, it is true, endeavour to purchase a certain quantity of the raw material in England, and by bidding for it increase the price; but would that be urged as a mischief. If the manufacturers complained that the quantity of wool has decreased, surely the making the growth of it
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more profitable would tend to increase the supply. I do not see how it could be contended that Ireland could beat us in the manufacture, by procuring the raw material cheaper, and that her bidding for it, could raise its price. If she bid for it, England, as the richer nation, might out-bid her, or at most she could obtain it at an equal price, and then the competition between the two countries would go on as it was at present. With respect to the comparative price of the raw material in the two countries, I beg to inform gentlemen, that at this very moment the price of it is something higher in England than it is in Ireland. My honorable friend has not, in the course of his speech, adverted to this circumstance; he has merely stated, that some time ago it was cheaper in England; but it appears from the concurrent testimony of all the witnesses, its price has been regularly increasing in England for the last ten years. I cannot undertake to speak with absolute certainty upon the subject, but I have received my information from a person not likely to be mistaken, and who would not certainly, intentionally mistake the fact. I understand that the average price of wool in Ireland is from 16s. to 18s. per stone, their stone being 18 lb. I am also informed by other accounts that

that the price of British wool of the same kind is ten-pence halfpenny per pound, which is about the same price. The witnesses have stated, that a pack of wool of 240lb. now cost 11*l.* 10*s.* or about eleven-pence per pound. It is true that in some particular kinds of wool the price is higher in Ireland, but that is of the finer sorts; the general price is greater in England. I contend, therefore, that as far as depends upon the comparative price of the raw material in the two countries, the regulation now proposed cannot have the effect of transferring the manufactures to Ireland. But even if wool was cheaper in England, Ireland by purchasing here must render the price of that article the same in both countries, and consequently the inequality in point of price, which is so much dreaded, would be done away.

Another argument which has been urged both by the learned counsel and by my honorable friend, has, I confess, very much astonished me. They have stated, that from the great cheapness of freight, wool might be sent at less expence to Ireland than it can be from one part of England to another. Even taking the calculation as they have made it, the difference would be so small, as not to produce any perceptible consequence; but their mode of making

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ing the calculation is extremely inaccurate, for they compared those parts of England, which are much nearer to Ireland than they are to Yorkshire, with the most distant possible communication between one part of England and another. If the Committee would examine the evidence, they would find with respect to all places from which Yorkshire drew its supply of wool, the communication between them and Yorkshire was much more easy than between them and Ireland.

The next argument which has been urged is, that the cheapness of wages in Ireland would enable her to manufacture cheaper. Upon this subject there are many considerations, which must suggest themselves to gentlemen's minds. It was stated that as wages and taxes were lower in Ireland they must beat England, where wages and taxes were higher. This was assuming a principle which contradicted the experience of the world, that a country that was taxed more lightly was better able to carry on manufactures than a richer country labouring under heavier taxation. If that proposition was true, would Great Britain in her manufactures have risen to such an unexampled height, under such a weight of taxation? The calculation which the learned counsel made upon the subject, was
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the most extraordinary and the most inapplicable that imagination could conceive. He took the whole of the taxes of the two countries, and divided them by the number of the inhabitants, and stated the result as the amount of each man's contribution. It was really astonishing how such a calculation could be made.—How many parts in this country in which the taxes had no effect upon the price of wages? Did the land tax, did the assessed taxes (which only fell upon houses of a superior description to those inhabited by labourers) did the stamp duties, increase the price of wages? Did all the taxes upon articles of luxury, upon wine, upon the higher kind of teas, increase the price of wages? These various articles, with others which I could enumerate, which constitute two-thirds of the revenue of the whole kingdom, could they be put into the general average, as the learned counsel had done?—Certainly not. But I do even believe that it would be found, upon examination, that Ireland was taxed in a higher degree than England. I also do differ from the learned counsel, in considering the nominal price of wages as the standard. In speaking of the wages given to a manufacturer, there are two considerations which occur, it was undoubtedly true that agricultural labor

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was cheaper in Ireland, but in various branches of manufactures, particularly those which required superior skill, such as in the cotton, the woollen and linen, the wages are higher in Ireland than in England.—This is also more particularly the case with overseers and persons of that description, to whom very high wages indeed are given to get them over from England.

The next and most important question is that respecting the capital. Where capital is in such a commanding state, as it is in England, it is much easier to continue and support a manufacture than it is to establish one in a country differently circumstanced with regard to capital. It has been stated, that in order to carry on this manufacture, which produced near twenty millions annually, there was a capital of £6,000,000 actually sunk: What temptation have the manufacturers to transfer all the manufactures of this country to Ireland?—Why, in the first place, they must give up the six millions they have sunk in England; and before they could establish it in Ireland, they must sink six millions more there. I state this to shew, not that Ireland would not derive any advantage from this regulation, but that there is not the least reason to apprehend that sudden transfer

fer which could give a shock to the vested capital.

The next part of the subject is that which relates to the state of the skill and machinery in the two countries. There is much difficulty in finding the extent to which our manufactures are benefited by the improvement of machinery: that it has done much, however, is perfectly clear. There is a difference in the statement of the degree in which the manufacture depended upon machinery; but take it either way, and the conclusion is the same. If little of the manufacture was carried on by machinery, then most of it must depend upon human skill and ingenuity. If that were so, it is not the day labourer but the skilful manufacturer that is wanted, and then Ireland would have no advantage, for the reasons before stated. If, on the other hand, most of it depended upon machinery, then all the argument about the cheapness of labor in Ireland falls to the ground, for machinery is as dear in one country as it is in the other. Taking the question therefore in either point of view, Ireland would not have the advantage over this country.

The next argument is to shew, that if this exportation is allowed, Ireland from its situation will have an advantage over us, on account of her

her ports being more favorable to fit out for the West Indies, America, or almost any part of Europe, and having the same means to obtain Spanish wool. Now upon the subject of Spanish wool, and also upon that of their own linen, I would ask, how stands the fact? I would ask whether they have rivalled us in Spanish wool, and whether they have not exported their own linen, through Great Britain? It appears upon the subject of Spanish wool, they bear no resemblance to us; and that as to the subject of their own linen, we have exported more of it for them than they have been able to export for themselves. Now I ask, whether these facts do not in reality amount to an answer to that part of the objection to the exportation of wool to Ireland. And how did this arise? Am I speaking this in London, at that port, which is more unfavourable than many others, in several points of view—more unfavourable on account of its being thronged with shipping, and clogged and almost choaked with trade, so much so, that the legislature are very properly entertaining measures to render it more commodious. What is the reason why trade comes here from Ireland?—that the linen of that country came for the purpose only of being afterwards exported again, under all the tediousness

tediousness of sailing, and the demurrage and other incidental inconveniences that are inseparable from such a course?—what is it that brings such a trade here?—what but the capital and the assortment that are peculiar to this metropolis? That capital and assortment would create trade at any time. It is a capital and an assortment not to be equalled in any part of the globe. The truth is, that the argument of my honorable friend against the continuance of the protecting duty upon the manufacture, is completely answered, as I have stated already. I would observe also, that we are more likely to undersell Ireland, than Ireland is to undersell us in the foreign market.

The result of all this is, that there does not appear any probability, for there is no prospect that Ireland can rival us in any considerable degree in the foreign market. Now with regard to the home market, which in several points of view is more important than the other, considering the subject with respect to skill, to capital, and to assortment, three points extremely material, the advantage is clearly in favor of Great Britain; nor is the advantage we have most clearly in the article of fuel of slight import in a question of manufacture.—The case being thus situated, there is not the least

least injury to be apprehended from allowing this exportation; there being, as I have contended, and hope successfully, no inconvenience to Great Britain, nor any danger to be apprehended that Ireland could rival us, either in the home or foreign market.—That in the event of their being able by the free importation to supply the whole of their own consumption, it would amount in the diminution to us to no more than one-thirtieth part of our whole manufacture, or more than one-third part of the whole annual increase for the last three or four years; and that consideration is supported by the conviction, that our capital will continue to increase much more rapidly than theirs, and that it will necessarily create a greater demand for labour, and consequently give a greater spur to the industry of our inhabitants, as well as cause a greater demand for the raw material than could be expected to be produced by them. Now, having discussed these points, I think I may allege, that I have said enough to shew that there can be no danger from this transfer to Ireland; but then I come to the question of the raw material. If I have shewn satisfactorily to the Committee, that that part of it, which is likely to go to Ireland must, from the nature of things, be limited, it follows,

lows, as matter of course, that the evil, if there can be any resulting from it, must be limited also; upon which I feel myself entitled to say—there is in the whole consideration of that part of the subject, nothing to justify a deviation from that liberal principle of free intercourse, which is the basis of the Union between the two countries.

Upon what ground the produce of wool is to form an exception from all other produce of the earth, or the traffic of the world, I own I am at a loss to decide. It was stated that the growth of wool could not be increased, and that particularly the growth of fine wool was confined to a few spots, and to a particular breed of sheep. Now, in point of fact, it appears in evidence from some of those gentlemen, who were witnesses called on behalf of the petitioners at the bar, that in Hampshire, by the introduction of the South Down sheep, the breed which produced the finest wool had greatly increased.—I speak this, as well as many other things upon this question, in the presence of many members, from whom the Committee might expect information much superior to any thing I could presume to offer; but I speak it with that species of confidence a man ought to have when he follows intelligence

gence on which he can rely. Under that impression, I would assert, as I believe, that where fodder has been improved in quantity, and where there has been artificial or forced grafs, the quantity of wool has been increased without injury to its quality, that the species of sheep which produced the finest wool in one place has been transported to another, and there the breed of sheep has been the same as originally, and the fineness of the wool has continued.

So much for increasing the quantity without deteriorating the quality of the wool. With respect to another argument, or rather assertion, (for it has been argued that the practice of inclosure has tended to diminish the quantity of the wool) the fallacy of it must be obvious upon the first view, because whatever had a tendency to the multiplication of sheep, must have a tendency to the increase of wool. I apprehend, therefore, that the general assertion that inclosure is unfavourable to the growth of wool is ill-founded. It contradicts the ordinary notions we have of the produce of nature. It is, however, no reproach to the manufacturers who appeared as witnesses at the bar in support of the petitioners, that they, in their ample wishes for abundance of the raw material, should have expressed, as they felt, great uneasiness

ness for themselves, or that my honorable friend stated for them that uneasiness. It was natural enough for men, whose minds were pre-occupied by alarm and apprehension, to state their opinions warmly and eagerly. It was natural for them too to proceed to any length, even in opinion, which an uninterested person would not keep up with. But with all the zeal, the laudable zeal, of those parties, neither my honorable friend for them, nor they for themselves, could convince the committee, that although they were extremely good judges of the work they performed on the raw material, they were as good judges of the growth of the raw material, as country gentlemen or farmers; those who have for the greatest part of their lives been employed in pursuits of agriculture. With this deficiency or inferiority of judgment, it is not wonderful that they recommended a policy, which if pursued would produce less of the raw material instead of more.

The next question in its order was whether an increase of the price of wool would contribute to the increase of the article? Upon this subject I must submit, that it appeared that the growth of wool must have increased considerably within these ten years, although they concluded the contrary: this would be manifest to the committee from the very cause which they
assigned

assigned for its diminution. By the statement of these manufacturers themselves, it appeared that in the year one thousand seven hundred and ninety-two they experienced the same scarcity as now, and the demand was the same then as now: I would therefore ask, whether I am not justified in saying, that the whole of the wool was worked up at that period? My honorable friend said, No, that the then apparent scarcity arose from a partial demand for clothing the French army. The whole export was only £152,000 to France, which exceeded the usual annual export by no more than £60,000, which upon the amount of £8,000,000, was next to nothing, and could not possibly have been the cause of the scarcity of the wool. What then was the conclusion from all this? Why, that the whole was worked up, as it is at present: and my honorable friend commented upon a demand that did not keep up, nor could possibly be the cause of the scarcity of which he spoke. My honorable friend said that the manufacturers of the West Riding of Yorkshire had purchased wool, and worked and acted on the strength of this demand for clothing the French army; and this produced a temporary and partial scarcity. The manufacturers of the West Riding of Yorkshire have talents which lead them to in-

quire into the nature of a demand before they worked much upon the prospect of it. Then would my honorable friend tell me, that such a demand as that which was made on the behalf of the French army, for clothing, could influence these manufacturers, and produce the scarcity which took place?—Taking the whole of these things together, I feel myself entitled to conclude, that in the year 1792 the whole of the raw material was worked up. This was confirmed also by the price which wool bore at that period. Now I would ask the committee what could have supported the increase of our exportation of cloth since that period, which was annually not less than £1,300,000, as appeared by the Custom House books?—Nothing certainly but the increase of growth. In addition to this, I have the statements of the manufacturers themselves, that the home manufacture has been more increasing during the whole of that period. It has increased in proportion to the export trade; indeed the export trade of this article could not increase without increasing in proportion the home trade. We could not increase such a manufacture as this, without increasing the home manufacture; and therefore I have made a very large allowance for the prejudices of others, who said, that the supply of the article must have been equal to

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two millions and a half annually, on account of the home trade. We must have the increase from some place or other.

Now upon the subject of Spanish wool, I have to observe, that the importation was very inconsiderable from the year 1792, not more than would produce £.20,000 annually, at the estimate of 4s. 6d. per pound. It has been stated the value of the manufacture was generally three times the value of the raw material; that was correct with regard to the coarser commodities, but of the finer, I believe, the value of manufacture does not exceed double that of the raw material. This importation of Spanish wool would account for but a small portion of the two millions and an half of the annual increase of the trade in manufacture, which I have stated. This increase must have been supported some how; by what means could it have been supported?—By none, most unquestionably, but by an increase of the raw material; and this during the very time, and even at the very moment, when my honorable friend supposed the raw material to be diminished. If I could shew, as indeed I trust I have shewn, to the entire satisfaction of the committee, that the manufacturers, who ap-

peared at the bar as witnesses, and also my honorable friend, had misconceived the state of the growth of wool, I must be allowed to doubt the accuracy of their calculation, as to the probable future growth of that article.

The next point to be considered, is whether the tendency of an advance in the price, in the article of wool, would be that of increasing the quantity of that article?—I speak without any unpleasant apprehension upon the subject, when I feel a probability of an advance in the price, that it would not tend to injure the manufacture, while the advance was moderate.—The manufacturers themselves admitted, and it must occur to the candour of my honorable friend, when he comes to review the subject, that an increase in the price has a tendency to increase the quantity. This is a thing too obvious to be disputed, since wool, like every other commodity, must depend in a great measure on the encouragement that is given to its production. But to say no more upon that subject; I ask the committee to consider another, and to examine what is likely to be the effect of union in the view of the operation of the capital: would it not occur to any man to think the effect of a redundancy of capital in Ireland, would

would be to improve the infant agriculture of that country?—who could doubt that that which happened to Scotland after the union, would happen to Ireland after the union?—who could doubt that although by this allowance of importation into Ireland, we convey a part of our wealth into that kingdom; yet that we should be amply repaid by the increase it will create in the agriculture of that country, in the increase it will create in the commerce of that country, without materially affecting ours, for the reasons I have already stated. Has wool any particular preference to the increasing wealth of Ireland, which by a wise policy might be and would be rapidly increased?—Has the continuance of that article in its present channel, any decided preference over the vigour and increasing industry which would follow an increase of this manufacture for the home, as well as foreign market; the home especially, which is the most beneficial of all markets, considered with reference to its effects on the œconomy of nations?—There is no part of the wealth of Ireland, whether its landed or commercial interest be considered, which will not open a field for the surplus or redundant capital of Great Britain after the union, and especially after this
 article

article is agreed to. Ireland will not be truly great either in agriculture or commerce, without opening a new market for the vent of the commodities which they have.

These are the arguments by which I hope and trust I have answered the objections of my honorable friend, and refuted the conclusions of the manufacturers who were examined at the bar, to the satisfaction of the committee; and by which I hope the great fabric of the British empire is to be upheld, and continue to be the admiration of surrounding nations. I give my honorable friend full credit for the purity of that zeal which has animated his eloquence in behalf of his constituents to-night; and in doing so, I am aware of doing my honorable friend no more than justice. I hope, however, that all the members of the committee, feel no partial or local tie, but that they all feel they are the representatives of the people at large. I hope they are the impartial representatives of the whole interests of the British Empire: that they all feel for Yorkshire, as well as my honorable friend, but Yorkshire only as one part; and that they feel it as their great and paramount duty, to embrace the whole of the United Empire. I hope there is

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not one of the members of the committee, who do not feel the ardour of patriotism for the whole empire, as well as my honourable friend does for his constituents, and for whose interest he has displayed so much eloquence, animated no doubt, by a sincere and entire conviction that what he was doing is conformable to the interests of the whole Empire. I hope there is not a single member of the committee who does not feel with due regard, the liberal manner in which my honorable friend's constituents had come forward in defence of the constitution of this country, and in support of that war, which was undertaken and is carried on, to preserve it, and with it all the blessings which a community can enjoy. I trust there is not a member of the committee, who does not feel sentiments of respect and esteem for the petitioners against the article of the union, when they instructed their learned counsel to say they rejoiced at the progress that was made in, and the prospect of completion of an incorporating union between Great Britain and her Sister Kingdom, which will unite the wishes and consolidate the strength of both. I hope the members of the committee feel nothing but a sincere desire to promote the real welfare of the British Empire ;
 although

although from different views they have of the same subject, they may conscientiously hold different opinions upon it. I do not hope by what I have said to alter the opinions of those, who after so attentive a view of the subject as they have taken, have formed their opinions against the side of the question I am now supporting : I do not expect it—it would be vain to expect that either my honorable friend, or those on whose behalf he had so eloquently spoken, would think that what they heard from me was satisfactory or conclusive. I know too much of the progress of the human mind, when bent upon a particular object, and governed by its wishes, to have any such expectation. I give those gentlemen full credit for the purity of their motives ; I hope they will treat me with the same candour : I trust, however, that what I have said is satisfactory to the committee, and that it will have gradually out of doors, among my honorable friend's constituents, the effect of removing their present very anxious apprehensions.

There remains only one more point to be considered, and that is relative to the effect of allowing the exportation of wool ; on this my honorable friend has not insisted so strenuously
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as the learned counsel who summed up the evidence. The argument was, that allowing the exportation of wool to Ireland, was in effect to allow it to every foreign port, and particularly to France. Now there are only two ways of effecting such a purpose; either of carrying clandestinely from Ireland into France, or of shipping it, and then to smuggle it into France: of the first there is no danger in particular; none that is not applicable to our coasting trade; it cannot be done without passing the Land's-End: and as to the other, it is only the same danger as applied to any article that might be at Southampton, or any port in the channel, or from any part of our coast that was open to that of the enemy; and which from the nature of the thing, must be left to those custom-house regulations, by which every article of smuggling is proceeded against, perhaps as well as human ingenuity could devise.

This, indeed, is not an important point, as my honourable friend himself admitted, although the learned counsel laid considerable stress upon it: I would not however pass it by, because I was unwilling in a matter so important as the present, to pass by any thing that has been pressed, whether important or trivial;
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but the great points on which I rest this question are these:—This resolution can derange no capital, put no manufactory out of work; it can create no void, but the effect of it is to be gradual; it requires no provision that is inconsistent with the freedom of either country; so far from impeding the progress of trade, it opens a new market for the general industry of the inhabitants of the Empire. The part it will take of the raw material of this country, is of no importance as a diminution of the means of wealth in one country, but may become considerably so when added to the means of the other: if it should create any advance in the price of the raw material, it is likely to be so moderate, as only to increase the produce, a thing in itself desirable, even in the opinion of its opponents; or if the increase should be so great as to become an evil, it is an evil which from its nature will cure itself. The tendency of this measure is to increase the demand for the manufacture, to give vigour to a system of industry; it has a tendency to increase the capital employed in one country, and is highly beneficial to the interests of both; it is to the advantage of the Empire at large, and will be so to the petitioners themselves. It is from a firm persuasion

persuasion of the truth of all these propositions, that I am going to vote for that which is before the committee; I do so from a full sense of public duty, and I only regret, that so large and so useful a class as the petitioners are of an opinion to the contrary.

Mr. Henry Lascelles said, that on a former occasion he voted for the union; he was now called upon to give his vote on the terms of that union.—He felt himself at liberty to give his opinion on that clause in the article, permitting the exportation of wool to Ireland. The house was in possession of many petitions from the principal manufacturing towns against that measure; and though it was stated in the speech of the right honorable the Chancellor of the Exchequer, that there was a sufficiency of wool in the country for the supply of our manufactures, yet on evidence taken at the bar, it appeared, that there was not, even with the importation of Spanish wool. The consequence was, that if there was none, but a bare or deficient supply, under the exportation of wool to Ireland, there must be a considerable deficiency. The growth of wool, which was in the Southern and Western counties of England, would furnish Ireland with an advantage over us, from
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the facility of importing it at an easier rate.—He admitted that the union was beneficial, but that the benefits were in favour of Ireland: security would certainly be gained to the Empire, and stability from its consolidation; notwithstanding which, Ireland may be benefited amply, without this sacrifice of our staple growth; and on those reasons he voted against that resolution.

Mr. Thornton voted for Mr. Wilberforce's amendment.

Doctor Lawrence objected to the resolution, and following up his objection, was entering on a full discussion of the Union, when the lateness of the hour rendered the house impatient for coming to a decision.—The learned Doctor concluded abruptly, recommending the committee to their God, their consciences, and their country, for their conduct and vote on the occasion.

Colonel Wood spoke against the resolution—every gentleman, he thought, may express his disapprobation of this article, without interfering with the main question of Union. The question was here loudly and unanimously called for, when

Mr. Smith rose under the impatience of the house, still calling for the question.

Mr. W. Smith

Mr. William Smith said, that he rose for the dignity of the House, saying, that he never beheld a more prostituted impatience. He was proceeding, when the gallery was ordered to be cleared, for the purpose of dividing the Committee on the resolution under its consideration.

The Committee divided on the resolution of *Mr. Wilberforce*;

Ayes	-	-	-	-	-	53
Noes	-	-	-	-	-	133

Majority against the amendment 80

The resolution was then carried without a division.

A conversation took place on the receiving of the report.

Mr. Everett made it his business, he said, to extend his inquiries through Gloucestershire, Wiltshire, Dorset, &c. and heard not one word of ruin to be apprehend from this regulation. On his particular enquiry whether the export of wool, was likely to produce any such effect, he was told not. A manufacturing town in Wiltshire, (Trowbridge) held a meeting expressly for this purpose, a discussion took place,

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and

and the decision was, that the exportation of wool would not be prejudicial to Great Britain.*

Mr.

• The Committee have been informed, from the most respectable authority, that no regular or public meeting was held at Trowbridge on the occasion. The only occurrence like a meeting, was a conversation that took place between some of the principal clothiers of that town; who, conceiving it to be irregular for the inhabitants to petition, (being manufacturers of Spanish wool *only*) one of them undertook, by the desire and in the name of the rest, to return their thanks to the Committee in London, and to assign that circumstance as the reason of their not meeting or petitioning.

Similar sentiments prevailed in other neighbouring towns where Spanish wool is exclusively manufactured; but they undoubtedly approved the proceedings of the manufacturers of English wool, and expressed that approbation, by letters, to the Committee, conveying the best wishes for their success.

The Committee certainly possessed the best channels of information, by their connection and correspondence with all the woollen manufacturers of the kingdom; and in no one instance have they heard of a woollen manufacturing town, or even of a single manufacturer of English wool, who did not think the allowing the exportation to Ireland would be injurious to Great Britain. They have not assumed the character of statesmen; but they humbly presume that they must know the facts, on which their own commercial interests are founded, at least as well as any member of either House. They did not come forward as disinterested men; but they appeared before the Legislature to implore a continuance of protection to their interests,

which

Mr. Hobhouse corrected the statement of *Mr. Everett*.—There was a meeting at Trowbridge, and another at Bradford, and neither was against the exportation of wool to Ireland, because neither was aggrieved by it, as their manufactures were of fine Spanish wool, and not of our native produce.

Mr. Everett said, he understood their manufactures were of Spanish and English wool.

Mr. Hobhouse reassured the Committee of the correctness of his own statement.

Mr. Bastard said, that the apprehensions of Devonshire were as great as Yorkshire on this new measure. It would transfer the capital of England to Ireland, and with it the manufac-

which they conceived to be inseparably interwoven with those of the whole empire, and particularly those of their British fellow subjects. But if (as they are bound from the determination of parliament to suppose) it be thought by that high tribunal to be necessary for the greater good of the united kingdoms that their interests should be sacrificed, they submit as becomes loyal subjects. If this measure should indeed turn out to advantage, they will rejoice, as good members of the state. And on the other hand, should it prove (as they strongly apprehend it will) very injurious to the country at large, as well as themselves, and the individuals they represent, they will enjoy the consolation of having done their duty in a manner becoming men of integrity, lovers of order, and friends to government.

tures too.—Those apprehensions were just, and he participated in them.

Mr. Buxton expressed his surprise that the landed interest never once entered in consideration, to whom the exportation of wool would be so beneficial.—That interest paid taxes, poor-rates, and he did not know why, in a great national arrangement, it should be proscribed. The landholders were already considerable sufferers by the prohibition, and he called the Committee to a due consideration of their case.

The Chancellor of the Exchequer said, that the supply was obtained from the wool of the succeeding season, and contended, that from the moment an encroachment was made, there was an end of the argument drawn from an accumulation on speculation. But if, in addition to this, it is admitted that the supply in full of that year, as also stated, was insufficient; then his own arguments were strengthened by the increase of the manufactures of the country being so much greater than its woollen produce; and if the importation of Spanish wool be not so great as to account for that increase, the inference of an increase in the material of wool in this country was fairly drawn from such a circumstance in favor of his argument.

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The Chancellor of the Exchequer proposed that the report be received to-morrow; Mr. Tierney was for some delay. Each persisted; Mr. Tierney founded his proposition on the precedent of the Scotch Union; as the report was not received till two days after the business was closed in the Committee.

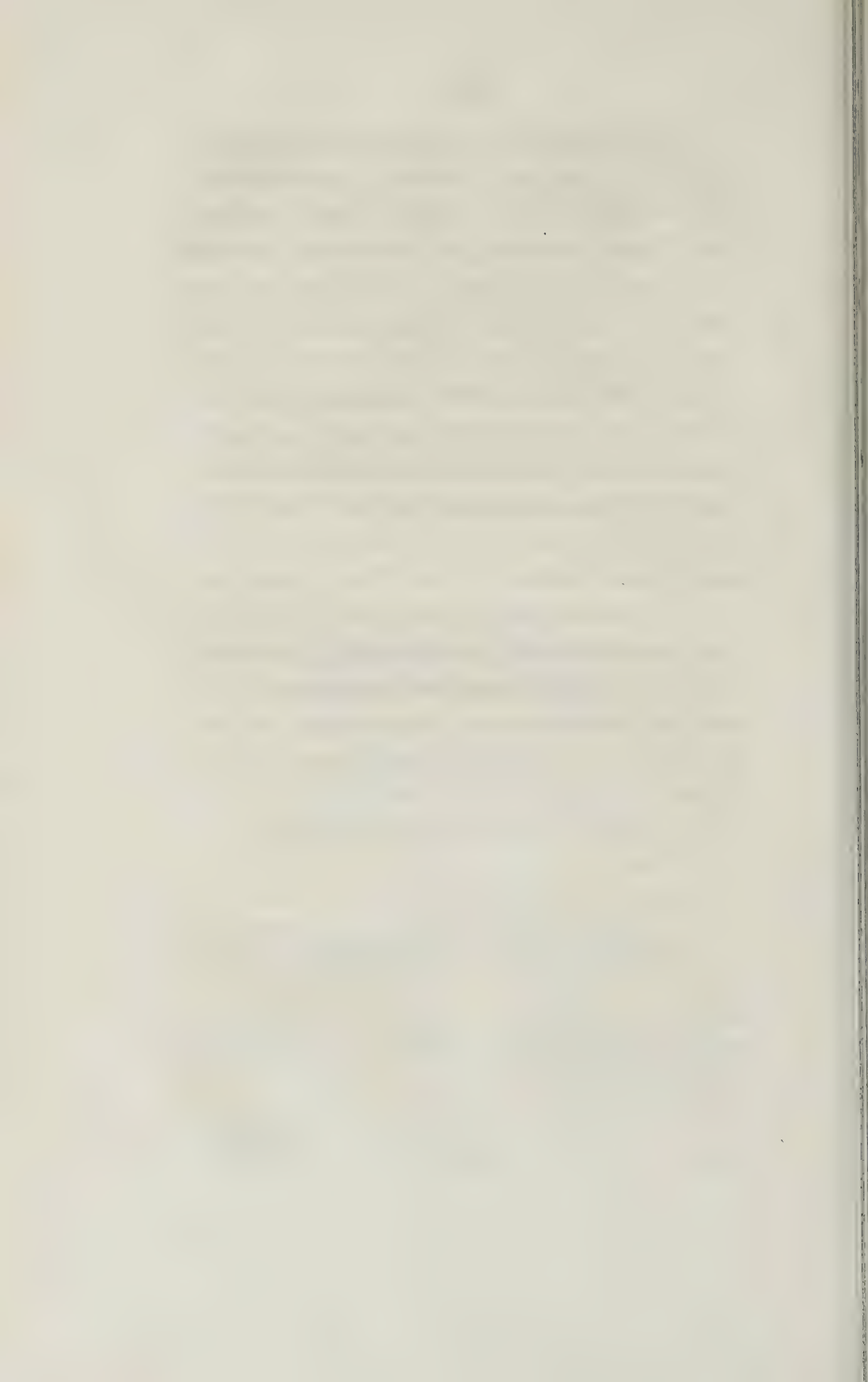
Mr. Pitt founded his proposition on the whole of the time this subject had been under consideration; much longer in duration than the Scotch Union, and insisted on the report being received to-morrow. Mr. Tierney said, he would take the sense of the House upon it.—The House was resumed, and the report from the Committee made, on which Mr. Pitt moved, “That it should be received to-morrow.” On this Mr. Tierney moved his amendment, “That it should be received on Monday morning.”

The House divided on the amendment.

Ayes	-	-	-	-	-	13
Noes	-	-	-	-	-	58

Majority against the amendment 45

The report was then ordered to be received on the morrow.



No. VII.

S P E E C H

OF

THOMAS PLUMER, Esq.

As Counsel for the Petitioners,

ON SUMMING UP BEFORE THE LORDS,

On the 2d of MAY, 1800.

MY LORDS,

BEFORE I state the case of the Petitioners, for whom I have the honor to appear, your Lordships will, I hope, permit me, in the name of my clients and myself, to return our most grateful acknowledgements for the kind indulgence with which your Lordships were pleased to honor us last night. It will be my earnest endeavour, in return for that great condescen-

tion and indulgence, to employ as small a portion of your Lordships valuable time in the discussion of this great subject as the importance of it, and the duty imposed on me, seem to require: and I hope your Lordships will pardon me if I should presume to solicit the honor of your Lordships attention, whilst without meaning to waste a moment of your time in departing from the question before you, I take the liberty, on the part of the Petitioners, to state the grounds upon which their apprehensions are founded, of the effect which the measure now under consideration will produce on them and their manufacture. They hope they have laid before your Lordships, in argument and evidence, sufficient ground, at least, to induce your Lordships to forbear coming to a final and irrecoverable decision upon this great question. They do not undertake to state that they have made out, by clear and demonstrative evidence, what will be the certain effect of the measure in question, but they hope, if it shall appear that there is at least considerable danger attending it;—that a valuable and important manufacture will be exposed by it to considerable hazard and peril, that will be deemed a sufficient reason why your Lordships should not adopt it in the mode proposed. I am perfectly
aware

aware of the manner in which, in some places, the complaints of Petitioners of this description are apt to be treated; but I am sure before your Lordships, the Petitions of a very respectable and numerous body of men, engaged in so important a manufacture, will not be thought unworthy of attention.—Without arrogating to themselves any knowledge, that does not belong to their limited sphere of life, they may be permitted to expect credit, for at least understanding rightly and detailing correctly plain facts, falling within their own knowledge and observation; from whence they have drawn what they conceive to be an extremely plain conclusion. My Lords, they feel it difficult to reconcile it to their understanding, how the measure that is now proposed, can be rendered consistent, either with what is due in justice to them, or with a due regard to the most important interests of the community. They do not presume to apply to your Lordships upon the present occasion, I am sure your Lordships will believe, from any wish to embarrass the operations of government, to which none of his Majesty's subjects in any part of the kingdom are more zealously and loyally attached, nor to interrupt the progress of the great measure of the Union of the two kingdoms,

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under the consideration of Parliament, for the speedy and effectual completion of which, as far as they may be presumed to exercise any judgment respecting it, they have expressed their ardent wishes.—But, my Lords, it is an extremely different question which is now before you.—It respects one particular part of a single article of the Union. The complaint of the Petitioners is that, circumstanced as their trade now is, the free unlimited export for ever of the raw material of wool, without duty and without restraint, to the neighbouring kingdom of Ireland, should constitute a part of the indissoluble Union about to be entered into between the two kingdoms.

They have felt it extremely difficult to reconcile to their humble understandings how in the present state of this manufacture, at a period of time when every part of the wool of this kingdom is unquestionably worked up into manufacture, when the whole of it is very inadequate to the purposes of their trade, when it is employed in the support of a manufacture which yields in the total exported out of the kingdom, no less than eight millions and a half, and in a total of annual manufacture, to the extent at least of twenty millions sterling; which employs at this moment a number of persons, unquestionably not less than between one and two millions.

lions. My Lords, they have found it difficult, I say, to reconcile to their understanding, how this should be the period of all others, when for the first time ever known in this country, the export of wool should be proposed to be allowed. Nay, further, my Lords, not solely that the export should, under these circumstances and at this time, be adopted, and all the prohibitory laws upon the subject repealed, but that they should be repealed for ever : not only that your petitioners should be at present deprived of your Lordships protecting aid, but that your Lordships would put it out of your power ever to extend that protection to them in future. This is the subject of their complaint ; all that they solicit of your Lordships is, that the subject may not thus be irrevocably bound and fixed. They do not wish for an irrevocable decision on the other side, viz. that the prohibition should be made perpetual, and not be liable to regulation by the authority and controul of the Imperial Parliament : they request only, that this, like every other subject constituting a part of the exports and imports of a great nation, fluctuating as they must do from time to time, with the articles that are the subject of them, may be left out of the definitive compact, so that it may be free for the United Parliament hereafter, to make such regulations upon the
subject,

subject, as the state of the commodity from time to time shall render proper. They do not now presume to state that they can offer to your Lordships more than the grounds upon which they deprecate an immediate and final decision. They submit with the greatest humility and deference to your Lordships, these grounds, conceiving them to be, at least sufficient to shew, that there is that danger attending upon the measure proposed to be adopted, to induce your Lordships to suspend for a time, any final decision upon it.

I am aware, that some of those who have expressed an opinion in favour of this measure, have adopted it upon a very general ground, that of calling in question the wisdom of the prohibitory laws upon the export of wool, and arraigning the property of them in toto ; and undoubtedly whoever is of that opinion, that the laws are fundamentally vitious and impolitic—that there ought never to have been any prohibition laid on the exportation of wool, but that it ought to be laid open to all parts of the world, will be disposed to approve, upon that ground, the present measure of an export to Ireland. But before that opinion is adopted irrevocably, I am persuaded your Lordships will think there is some deference due to the wisdom and experience of past ages. The fixt policy
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of this country, now uniformly pursued for a century and a half, has been directly the reverse: it has been deemed a first principle of our commercial policy, to continue in the strictest manner, the prohibition upon the export of wool, as essentially necessary for the preservation of the trade and manufacture of this country. I am not now stating that this forms the whole of the question for your Lordships consideration, but it is one general and leading proposition, and therefore demands examination, in the commencement of the argument.—Your Lordships will remember upon what high authority and what venerable ground, this system of policy is founded, even in the earliest period of our manufactures, before it was known that all the wool produced in this country would be worked up in the kingdom; when it was only for the purpose of encouraging what was so much wished,—in the confidence that a strict prohibition of the export might ultimately effectuate that great object of the nation's hope; the provident wisdom of the legislature, with persevering steadiness, adopted this system: neither was it the system of one period, or of one reign, but the subject of an uniform series of acts of parliament passed from time to time at distant intervals, in the course of no less than fifteen different reigns. All the wisest statesmen
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that have sat in both houses of parliament, have given it the sanction of their approbatory judgment upon the subject ; taking to their aid all the wisdom of their ancestors, and what was still a better test, and better criterion of true policy, all that the experience of the nation had discovered to have been the effect of mischief from the relaxation, and of benefit from the continuance of this system ; they have uniformly preserved in the same constant maxim, to keep the wool of Great Britain at home, to encourage the manufacture of it at home, as the native commodity of the kingdom, and the basis of all its trade and commerce. Need I refer your Lordships to any private authority upon this subject. Undoubtedly there are not wanting great names opposed to any that can be stated, if private opinion is to be resorted to, on the other side : but I do not avail myself of the opinions of Doctor Campbell, my Lord Hale, or my Lord Bacon. I stand upon what is better entitled to your Lordships attention, the great repository of the nation's wisdom, recorded in the statutes of the kingdom. Your Lordships know, that so early as the reign of Edward the First, one of the wisest princes, as Lord Hale states, that ever ruled this kingdom, a proclamation issued to prohibit the export of wool, in order to rescue from the hands of foreigners,

reigners, the woollen trade, that was at that time, from a contrary practice, falling into them, and to endeavour, if possible, to restore this valuable trade to the flourishing state in which it had existed in the reigns of Henry the Second and Richard the First. The necessity of the times, I admit, procured a temporary relaxation of this salutary policy, in order to procure a revenue upon the grant of licences for the exportation of wool. But what was the consequence?—The immediate decline of the trade of this country, and a transfer of it to foreign nations; the invariable consequence whenever this mischievous traffic was permitted. Your Lordships know, how in a later period, this contributed in part, to enhance the dreadful troubles in which this country was involved.—The historians state, that when for the sake of the subsidy, improvidently granted to James the First, the export of wool was permitted, the consequences were, that trade languished, the industrious manufacturer migrated to another country, and those who were out of employ staid at home and contributed mainly to the dreadful troubles which ensued: it was soon found necessary from dear-bought experience, to restore the ancient policy, and accordingly the prohibition of the exportation of wool, made one of the first acts of the restoration, a wise and popular

pular act, the 12th of Charles the Second.—My Lords, the great men who restored the monarch to his throne, who, at the same period, provided for the naval strength of the kingdom, by the important act of navigation which laid the basis of our maritime and commercial power and wealth, with the same provident wisdom, established the restoration of the internal trade and manufactures of the kingdom, by reviving the prohibition on the export of wool. The grounds of this measure are stated in the preamble of the act “For the better preventing the losses and inconveniencies which have happened by and through the secret and subtle exportation of wool out of the kingdom, and for the better setting to work the poor people and inhabitants of the kingdom, and to the intent, that the full and best use and benefit of the principal native commodities of the kingdom, may redound to, and be unto and amongst the subjects and inhabitants of the kingdom, and not unto any foreign realms or states.” In another act the export of wool is stated to be productive “of the great decay of the woollen manufactures, the ruin of many families, and the destruction of the navigation and commerce of the kingdom.”

It should seem hardly necessary that so plain and self-evident a proposition should require any

any authority in support of it; undoubtedly it cannot but be wiser and better, if the object can be accomplished, to work up the wool into manufacture producing three times its original value, and giving employment to a numerous body of industrious subjects, than to export it abroad in a raw state, even at an advanced price. It seems to be a self-evident proposition, and not one that can be justly branded with the imputation of being suggested by the narrow-minded or covetous disposition of those who are engaged in the manufacture. It might rather be called a narrow-minded policy to endeavour to export it for the sake of a little mercenary advantage in the sale, in opposition not only to the true interest and advantage of the kingdom, but also as the exporter would see if he were not a narrow-minded person, in opposition to his own individual interests, in the effect produced on the value of his sheep, of his land, and of all its produce by the prosperity or decline of the manufacture, in proportion as the wool is exported abroad, or worked up at home. Halifax, and the neighbouring towns, it has been well observed, have clothed the hills of Lincolnshire. The manufacture is therefore entitled to protection upon the most enlarged principles, and the legislature has considered the infraction of this policy not

on the footing merely of illicit trade, but as a crime against the state. They have declared that those who endeavoured to contravene the policy of the country, and export its wool abroad to the great loss of the community and every individual in it, deserve to be branded with the imputation, and subjected to the punishment even of felons. Your Lordships know that at another memorable period after the execution of these laws had been relaxed, the same policy was resumed at the Revolution. In the first year of William and Mary, an Act passed to render more effectual the prohibition of the export of wool. In the eleventh year of the same reign your Lordships know it was extended to Ireland with additional restrictions; and in the subsequent reigns of George I. and II. and even in the present reign, and down to the very recent period, has the same system been continued. Your Lordships know that when this subject was a very few years ago under the consideration of parliament, the necessity of enforcing the prohibition on the export of wool was fully established, and an Act passed in the 28th of the king for the consolidation of all the former laws on this subject into one, with additional penalties and restrictions, such as the nature of the subject rendered necessary, for more effectually keeping the wool at home.

Surely

Surely then after such a series of acts for so long a period, it will hardly be said that this is a narrow-minded policy, an odious monopoly, or that any individual will think himself competent to call in question the wisdom of the legislature so strongly and repeatedly declared on the general question of retaining at home the wool grown in the kingdom for the employment of its own manufactures. But supposing the policy in any antecedent period to have been questionable, before it was known whether the object of that policy could be completely obtained, yet did any person ever doubt the propriety of that policy, if happily such a state of things were arrived, as is accomplished at this day. If it should be found that all the wool of the country could be worked up into manufactures at home, did any man ever doubt that then it would become a wise policy not to suffer a single pound of it to be exported.

What is the period then at which it is now proposed to abolish *in toto* all the antecedent restrictions upon this subject as far as respects Ireland, and to permit the unlimited export of it to that country? it is a period when undoubtedly if no law had ever passed before on the subject, yet upon the obvious principle

that you are to keep at home, *that* which you want at home, *that* which you use at home, *that* which is valuable at home, upon the very same principle that regulates the export and import of every other commodity, you would have been particularly called upon at this period of time to prohibit the export of this commodity. The crying necessity of the times, the actual scarcity experienced, the inadequacy of the supply to the home manufacture, would have loudly called upon you to have imposed a prohibition, if none had ever existed before.

Upon this subject your Lordships have the evidence of no less than eleven or twelve witnesses, who upon their oaths have stated what is the present state of the demand for and supply of this commodity in the market: and however lightly they may be treated with respect to understanding, and they do not presume to arrogate to themselves any great degree of extensive general knowledge, (though they are undoubtedly a keen and intelligent set of men) they require only credit for common veracity and common honour, in speaking to facts within their own knowledge. I am not now going to inquire into the causes of the scarcity of wool, but the fact of the scarcity is proved by all the witnesses to exist within their own certain knowledge

knowledge. That there has been a continuing scarcity, no matter from what cause, whether from an increased demand, or a decreased supply, experienced ever since the year 1793, and gradually increasing to a considerable degree; that this is in fact experienced by the trade in every way in which scarcity can be discovered—unless your Lordships are to reject *in toto*, the evidence of these respectable gentlemen who have sworn to their own knowledge to that which has passed under their own observation, and that too without any evidence to the contrary, your Lordships must take this as an undoubted fact,

My Lords, they swear that in consequence of this scarcity, they have been obliged to reject some of the orders they have received from abroad. That they have been under the necessity of sending to different places for the purpose of obtaining a supply to which they did not usually resort. One gentleman tells you that endeavouring to obtain his usual supply from Northumberland and the borders of Scotland, he could obtain none; that coming up to London to be supplied with two or three hundred packs of fine wool, he could only obtain seventy. Another speaks of his agents riding forty miles, and not being able to obtain an ounce of wool. Let it not be said

this is the case in one or two counties only ; we have examined witnesses, one of whom has gone through thirty-two counties, besides Scotland and Wales ; another through thirteen, and different witnesses from every quarter of the kingdom uniformly concur in the result, that their correspondents in every part declare that at this time they cannot get the quantity of wool they want, that if they had more they could work it up, and in consequence of the inadequacy of the supply they have been under the necessity of rejecting many orders they had received, some of which are entirely lost, and others postponed ; and at this moment they know not where to obtain the commodity they want. Is this a period for the first time of encouraging the export of this commodity ?

My Lords, these are men of plain understanding, but they cannot comprehend how it can possibly be wise in a period like this to export a commodity already inadequate to domestic use ; to encourage the export to any place of that very commodity which is productive of such invaluable effects here, and which at this time we find actually to be insufficient for the purposes for which it is wanted. Does this arise from any temporary causes ? the witnesses have all, as far as they are able to judge upon the subject, declared the contrary :
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whatever be the cause, whether it arises from an increased demand, or from a decreased supply, is there any prospect of either of these causes operating in future in a different way. With respect to the demand, they state they have every reason to believe that it will rather be increased than diminished; for, in the event of a different state of things, on the return of peace, though it may in some cases operate to abridge the demand, yet that it will in others open new markets, and in the whole probably increase the demand of this commodity both at home and abroad. There is no prospect therefore that if the petitioners are permitted to retain the commodity, and to work it up into manufactures, the demand will be reduced. As to the supply, there is in point of fact at this moment experienced a less supply than there used to be; the same causes are likely to produce the same effects, and in a greater degree. Upon this subject, I am aware that much is open to speculation and conjecture, whether or not from the causes that have been stated, upon a review of the progress made in the agriculture in this country, the result is, that there is at this time actually more or less wool produced than there used to be. Your Lordships know that all the writers who have be-

stowed their attention to this particular subject of the growth of wool, agree, that there are two principal modes by which the growth of wool in any country can be improved, that is to say, by improving the breed of sheep, or by an attention to the pasture, added to the circumstance of management and attention to the care of the animal. With respect to the pasture they all agree that the wilder, less cultivated pasture, the wild open downs, the more extensive range the animal has to walk for his food, improve the fleece; render it not more abundant, I admit, but finer and fitter to produce the short clothing wool.

Now let any body, in a general point of view, look round the country, and state whether of late years there has been an increase of that sort of pasture, or a diminution of it.— Does not every body know that within the period of this present reign, there are computed to have been no less than a million of acres inclosed. I know that some part of this was before in the state of arable land, open common fields, and that since the inclosure, part being continued in arable and part converted into pasture, it may yield more pasture, but not that sort of pasture which is most favorable for the growth of wool; for old open fields inclosed and fertilized by the present system of
agriculture,

agriculture, would not contribute to the amelioration of the article of wool. And the inclosing, improving, and converting into arable, in part at least, of large tracts of open wastes, extensive wide ranges of uncultivated heaths and commons, is a considerable drawback on the other side, as to quantity as well as quality of pasture. Upon the total result the witnesses tell you that in their own experience they have observed a very considerable diminution both in the quantity and quality of wool arising from these causes. Whether their judgment is well or ill founded upon this subject, it is not pretended to be matter of the same certainty with the other facts they have stated. It is submitted to your Lordships superior judgment and superior knowledge, how far the theory is well founded; how far by any practicable methods the growth and the quality of wool may be improved, consistently with the other wants of the kingdom;—if you could dictate to the farmer the mode by which he should cultivate his lands, you may perhaps increase the quantity, but it is much doubted whether you can improve the quality, unless by the improvement of the breed, and then again not without great attention to the pasture. Is it likely that there will be any favorable change in these respects, so as to yield a larger supply in future either of the
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finer or the coarser wool? I submit there is every reasonable probability of the contrary: that from the same progress in agricultural improvement, which the wants and necessities of the times and an increasing population call loudly for, in the cultivation of land, with a view to the growth of corn and the breeding of larger sheep and cattle for food, nobody can reasonably hope that there will arise any considerable change in favor of the growers and consumers of wool, by which either a larger quantity will be produced in future, or the quality of it be improved.—But what is stated upon this subject is matter of theoretical speculation; at best it is matter merely of conjecture on one side and the other: what is likely to be the result in future no one can state with any degree of certainty. Give me leave, my Lords, with all submission, to ask your Lordships, whether any wise man would venture to act in an important measure upon a conjecture of what is likely to be in future? will he not think it safest and wisest to act upon the present state of things? much more when he considers the little there is of probability that the growth of this article or the demand for it is likely to be materially altered, or if it is, the greater probability there is that all things considered the quantity of this raw material will be rather
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reduced than augmented, and the demand in future rather increased than diminished. I know it has been said that the quantity of supply will always keep pace with the quantity of demand, and that in fact the scarcity that is now experienced is owing to the great increase of the manufacture. My Lords, with great submission, I believe there is some little fallacy in considering the case even in that point of view. That there is some increase of the manufacture I hope and trust and believe, but that there is not that increase which a view of one particular document would seem to present, I am afraid is certainly the case; because though there unquestionably is a great increase in the Western Riding of Yorkshire in the manufacture, yet if your Lordships are to take that as a criterion throughout the kingdom of an augmentation in the same proportion, I am afraid the conclusion would not entirely be warranted to that extent.—For your Lordships have heard at your bar some witnesses who speak to the contrary being the case at other places, namely that at Lavenham, Bocking, and other places there is a considerable decline, and that the trade has travelled from them into Yorkshire.

In addition to this, when an increase in one branch of the woollen manufacture is assumed, as proof of the increase of the growth or supply
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of wool, we are to take into consideration another important subject, namely, if there be an increase in one sort of manufacture, how much of diminution there is in another. A considerable part of the wool of this country was formerly used in female attire.—Your Lordships know how much that has been supplanted by the cotton manufactures.—This has therefore shut out that source of consumption, and therefore in calculating the total quantity of the growth of wool actually applied to the purposes of manufacture as it is carried on now, and as it was formerly, though it presents in exportable articles an increase, though there appears to be an increase in the fine cloth in the West Riding of Yorkshire, which is all that is comprehended within the return for that district (the stamped articles only which are of the finer sort being included in it) from whence your Lordships would be led to suppose a considerable increase in the actual supply of the article of wool; yet that must be received with grains of allowance. But supposing there were a general increase in the manufacture, is that necessarily to be attributed to an increase in the actual produce of wool in the country?—Every body knows, who has read the returns of the exports and imports of the kingdom, that it is in part to be attributed to another distinct
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cause, namely, to a considerable augmented importation of foreign wool. Is it not notorious that within the last few years the importation of Spanish wool has greatly increased? In a former year, I think, we imported 14,000 bags—it is now raised to 28,000, double the quantity it used to be. The average value of the import from Spain now exceeds £621,000, this is an accession of fine wool, and accounts in a great measure for the increased manufacture of fine cloths, it being principally used for that purpose.—In addition to which your Lordships know that from another country there is imported wool, which used formerly not to yield any to us—I mean from Portugal. These are sources of supply to be taken into the account, when we consider whether the increase of the manufacture necessarily implies an increase of the supply. But we find from the general return that was made in the year 1740, to the Treasury, the total amount of wool at that period was represented to be 738,000 packs grown in the country; the total quantity now grown, according to any mode of calculating it, is 600,000 only. When this subject was under the consideration of the two houses of parliament in the year 1788, that was admitted on all sides to be a fair representation of the total growth of the kingdom at that time, and it is
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confirmed by witnesses who have been examined at your Lordships bar upon oath, who state, they verily believe it to be now the total quantity of the growth of the kingdom: if that be so, there has been in fact a considerable decrease, and this comparative statement, added to the general history of the agriculture of the country and its effects, and the other circumstances before mentioned, seem to present reasonable grounds to your Lordships, as far as this is to be the basis of argument or of action, to infer that the actual growth of wool in the country, considered by itself, is not so great as it was formerly, and that it is not likely in future to be increased. But waving this question entirely, and without referring to causes, whatever be the cause I stand upon the fact of the actual scarcity; that fact cannot be controverted—scarcity is a relative term; we mean by it when there is not sufficient for the demand: if that demand is likely to continue, I say there is, as applied to this country considered by itself, an actual scarcity of the commodity you propose to export. This it is which the manufacturers complain of, and without enquiring whether it is referable to one cause or the other, or the joint effect of both, which is probably the case; but the fact depose to at your Lordships bar, that a scarcity has been experienced in every
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way in which it can be ascertained, for several years back, and that the stock the manufacturers now have in hand, is so small, that they will have worked the whole of it up four months sooner than usual; that they do not believe their stock will last longer than July, and that they do not know where to get an additional supply for their necessities. These facts, I say, if not contradicted, are decisive against the justice and policy of exportation. The country cannot, without loss, afford to export it anywhere; therefore the Petitioners entreat your Lordships, not to permit the export, now for the first time. They deprecate it, on account of what has been proved to be the situation of the trade, by the concurrent testimony of all concerned in it, that at this moment every ounce of wool that can be procured, is actually worked up into manufacture, and that the total quantity has been, and is every where indisputably unequal to the demand.

Give me leave, my Lords, next to enquire, whether there is any prospect that can safely be relied upon, of deriving the sources of supply from any other quarter? We have been told that even if the quantity of British wool should not be increased, there will be an ample supply rushing in from other countries: from whence, I would beg leave to ask, is this boasted quantity of foreign
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supply likely to be furnished?—Not to mention how lamentable a thing it would be, for this country to depend upon a foreign supply, for the material of one of its principal manufactures, constituting now between a third and a fourth of the exports of the kingdom; let any person conversant with the country from whence the largest portion of foreign wool is now derived, state, whether there is any rational ground to hope that the source of supply from that country is likely to be increased—is it likely to be increased by any alteration in the internal state of that country, or by the diminution of any other external demand upon it for this commodity? Is there any person conversant with the present situation of Spain, who does not know that in both respects the very reverse is to be apprehended; that, as it has been recently stated by an intelligent traveller, the people there are turning their attention to manufactures; that in the neighbourhood of Barcelona they have fourteen Manchester machines at work, which they have adopted in consequence of a model transported there from this country in the year 1785; that the large exportation of wool is at this moment the subject of national complaint and jealousy; that they are alive to the mischief produced by the impolitic sacrifice made both of manufacture and agriculture to
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the cultivation of this article. Hitherto their wool has certainly been a subject to which great private attention is paid: the carcase there is of very inferior value, the flesh of their sheep being little better than carrion, as I think some writers upon the subject state. The country in this respect, has remained in that early state of civilization in which we find the skin of the animal more attended to than the carcase; but in the progress of improvement the converse takes place. As soon as Spain shall open its eyes to the improvement of the country, the opposite system will be adopted, and there certainly is reason to imagine it soon will, when it is considered that within a few years there has been supposed to be an increase in that country of no less than two millions of people, and that in the year 1740, a gentleman was actually invited from this country with an offer of a pension of £. 500 a year for the very purpose of establishing the woollen manufactory in Spain. I beg to ask your Lordships whether in this state of things there is any rational hope, upon which a wise statesman would venture to act, that we are likely to obtain an increase of the import of wool from that country?—Is there not rather danger to be apprehended that the supply from that country will, from the operation of these causes, be diminished. Permit me next to con-

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der the external demand on Spain from foreign countries for this commodity, whether it is likely to diminish or increase the supply from that country to this?—At present, happily for us, Great Britain is the principal customer for all the wool exported from that country, owing to the lamentable condition of foreign countries who are engaged in the manufacture of war instead of goods, and who therefore are not in a situation to draw their usual supply of wool from thence, and consequently leave it to be wholly engrossed by the manufacture of Great Britain. But can we rationally hope that this will always be the case?—Will the return of peace, when it is restored to all Europe, bring no return of manufactures to foreign countries?—Will not the trade in part run into those channels, and an increased or revived demand for this article, from those countries, diminish the quantity of wool to be exported to this, even supposing Spain should continue to grow and to permit as large a quantity to be exported as they do at this day? I take the liberty, with great humility, of submitting these considerations to your Lordships superior wisdom and judgment, who have infinitely better means of knowledge upon all these subjects, as the grounds upon which the Petitioners humbly presume to think they have just cause to apprehend danger to
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their manufactures from the measure in question; and to state that they cannot, under all the circumstances, derive any rational prospect of relief to their necessities, from a future augmented supply of wool from Spain.

Is there any prospect then, of deriving supply from Ireland? I have heard it said, that this is to be a fertile source of future supply: the Sister Kingdom will send you wool, much or more than she will receive from you. I beg leave to state the apprehensions of the Petitioners, that this will also be found to be a visionary and fallacious ground of reliance. If the hope of deriving supply from Ireland is to be the ground upon which this measure is to be adopted; it should be shewn how this is to be effected, and an alteration in the agriculture of Ireland brought about for this purpose. I beg leave to ask of your Lordships too, whether it be most reasonable, that the manufacturers of Ireland should depend upon the future supply of Ireland, if such a supply can be obtained, or that the manufacturers of Great Britain should rest a precarious hope upon the uncertainty of what hereafter may be produced from thence. The manufacturers of Great Britain have no objection that each country should be allowed exclusively to retain and work up its own raw material. That the wool of Ireland should

be confined to Ireland, and the wool of Great Britain be confined to Great Britain. If Ireland can employ the whole of its wool, if it can hereafter increase the quantity, let Ireland have the full benefit of its whole produce, but the manufacturers of Great Britain, with great humility, submit to your Lordships, that it is unreasonable to compel them to embark their capital, and to rest the support of their trade upon the precarious hope, which may or may not be realized, of a supply from the future expected growth of another country. The people of Ireland can better afford to trust to that precarious hope, because they have not yet got any other. It is a reasonable and a natural thing that each country should be allowed to consume what each wants of its own produce; and therefore if there be a hope of future supply, let Ireland have all the benefit of it.

But your Lordships will give me leave to examine shortly, whether there is any reasonable ground to believe that there will be an augmented supply from an increased growth of wool in Ireland. Are there not other objects to call for the full improvement of the agriculture of Ireland? Are there not other paramount objects of attention? The linen manufacture for instance, and the growth of cattle for supplying provisions, which are exported to

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a very considerable amount from time to time, and various other modes in which the lands of that country are and will be employed to more profitable purposes than they could be by being directed solely to the production of wool? What reasonable ground is there to expect any increased cultivation of that article? Have the people of Ireland, up to this period of time, in fact, applied their attention to it in such a way, as to induce any rational person to build on the expectation that they will in future apply their minds to the growth of this raw material, if they can be supplied with it from Great Britain? Whether the climate and soil of Ireland be equally favourable? Whether the wool of Great Britain, which we know is coveted by all nations, be not preferable to the wool grown any where else, not excepting Ireland, is a question upon which many wise men have thought in the affirmative. But surely at all events this is a matter of uncertainty, and as such ought not to be made the basis of any important measure, much less of one that is to be permanent. If the period ever should arrive when Ireland is able to yield a considerable augmented produce, that will be the period for the Imperial Parliament of this country, if it be competent, if its judgment be not unalterably fixed before, to make arrangements ac-

according to circumstances. What will a wise man do in such a case,—he will leave the subject open for future regulation. Do not, my Lords, therefore, we entreat you, cramp yourselves. Do not put on the adamantine chains, by which you will be bound and fettered for ever.

As the growth of wool in one country or another may become greater or less; as the demand for it may vary, you may, if you are left free, adopt, according to the change of times, whatever policy is best adapted to the subject. This is the mode of acting which would naturally be expected to be suggested from looking forward to futurity, and indulging a speculation respecting this article. I should hope, therefore, that taking the subject in this point of view, your Lordships would be of opinion we had stated sufficient grounds to induce you to forbear coming to an immediate and final decision upon the subject, and still more to avoid the immediate adoption of the rash and dangerous innovation proposed of an irrevocable surrender of the wool of Great Britain. Another ground of hope held out in favor of the proposed measure, has been, that it will not produce the effect which we have stated. It is said our fears are vain, our apprehensions visionary. Ireland is not likely to possess herself of our wool, when the prohibition upon
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the export is taken off. I beg leave to state, that if that prediction were well founded, it would still form but a poor argument in favour of the measure. That the only or the principal recommendation of it, is a hope of its inefficacy, that when adopted it will be productive of no consequences, at least not its natural consequences. You are desired to allow an export, from an assurance that when allowed no export will follow. If there is no rational ground of expectation that Ireland will import our wool, why then is it to be an article of the Union that Ireland should be allowed to import it? Could it not easily have been made matter of different regulation? What necessity for tying yourselves down for ever to permit the exportation to Ireland, if Ireland is not in a state likely to want it? No injury is done to Ireland by withholding the exportation of what she will not use. If this argument is well founded in fact, it is decisive that Ireland could not complain, if wool should be classed at the end of the sixth article of the Union, among those articles of the growth and produce of this country, which are not to be exported into that without the sanction of the Imperial parliament.

But is this again a solid and sure ground of dependance? Is there a reasonable prospect that Ireland will not avail itself of this valuable

boon? Is not the raw material of Great Britain held out to them as a most valuable boon, from which they are likely to attain immediate and extensive advantages. Looking at the past history of the woollen manufacture of Ireland, who will venture to prophesy that Ireland will not hereafter avail itself of the wool of England, if the export should be allowed?

My Lords, I beg to call your Lordships' recollection to that history; I shall state it very shortly: Your Lordships know there was a period of time not very far distant, when Ireland was a competitor with England, in the woollen manufacture. Your Lordships know that it called forth the legislative interposition of this country to cramp the rival, to restrain the competitor, and to confine the benefits of the woollen manufacture to this country. I do not mean to state the act with commendation; but only to urge it as a proof that at that period Ireland was advancing in the woollen manufacture, so as to create alarm in Great Britain of rivalry in foreign markets, and therefore the statute of King William was passed to prevent the competition, and prohibit the export of Irish woollens abroad. Surely this is sufficient to shew the idea is not altogether visionary, that the woollen manufacture may be carried on in the sister kingdom. Why
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it should not have been carried on in any great extent from that time till a late act of parliament took off the restriction, is easily accounted, for so long as they were debarred from the foreign market, it is not to be supposed that this article of manufacture would be greatly cultivated; a principal stimulus to the Irish adventurer in the woollen manufacture was wanting, the Irish manufacturer being precluded from a foreign market, and excluded from the possession of the raw material grown in Great Britain. But who will venture to argue from thence, that the Irish nation will not again take up the woollen manufactures, when both these obstacles are removed? When the foreign market is open to him equally with the British merchant, and the raw material of Great Britain open to him equally with the English manufacturers; who can pretend to say that with these advantages, he may not become again a formidable rival to the manufacturer of Great Britain? The article of ratteens, Dr. Campbell, in his Political Survey, states, was at that day manufactured to great perfection at Carrick. We know the Irish are actually at this time working up the greatest part of the wool of the country in the total supply of their army and militia. We know that at this time the total amount in value of Irish wool im-
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ported into this country, is reduced to no more I think than ninety-two pounds sterling. Is there not then reason to believe that the Irish adventurer may take up this article of manufacture, when he is encouraged to it by all the inducements which the Union, in addition to the possession of the raw material of Great Britain, will hold out?

If this were deemed probable from mere general reasoning, or general speculation before, surely it has now received a most formidable accession of strength, so as to affright the stoutest mind, from the evidence given in this house last night. I allude to the testimony of the witness who has recently arrived from Ireland, and who therefore could not be examined in the other House of Parliament; who, after ten weeks residence in Ireland, has given your Lordships the result of his own personal observations. He has told your Lordships, that he saw with his own eyes in the neighbourhood of Cork, a large and extensive manufactory, erected within the last six or seven years, for the purpose of carrying on the woollen manufacture, equal in extent and goodness in the construction of it to any manufactory in this country; adopting all the modern improvements in the trade, capable of being worked by water, advantageously situated, and
superior

superior in many respects to any works of a similar nature existing in Great Britain. Can it then be said that our apprehensions are altogether visionary, that the woollen manufacture if the export of wool be allowed, will be set up in Ireland? Can it be said that this is a mere groundless alarm of interested men? when before an Union was in contemplation, even when the prohibition upon the export of the raw material existed, when the Irish were not in the state in any respect which it is now proposed to put them; an adventurer did erect a very extensive building, for the purpose of carrying on the woollen manufacture? Does not that afford sufficient ground to believe, that with a better protected country, with a better protected trade, with all the stimulus and encouragements, which will arise from the great measure now in contemplation, that these projects which were in contemplation before, will go on in an augmented ratio, that they will increase not only in the neighbourhood of Dublin, where the witness stated them to be also forming, but throughout all Ireland, if by any possibility Great Britain should be induced to do that which even the most sanguine Irishman did not imagine it was possible ever to persuade this country to do, namely, consent to export its raw material—its wool. If this
could

could be effectuated, there is no doubt there are numbers ready instantly to set up the manufacture in that country.

But it is said, Let them set it up, the English manufacturers have nothing to fear, they will be unequal competitors; for you are in possession of the trade, you have capital, you have customers, you have established manufactures, and long will be the time before they are put upon a similar footing, or can in any respect stand a competition with yourselves. I admit that there is weight in that argument, that it will for a time operate in favour of Great Britain; but, my Lords, consider on the other hand, that British capital is not chained to this country, it may be easily transferred by any person who finds it his interest to carry on the trade in both countries, or to settle any of his relations or dependants in manufactures in Ireland. With respect to established manufactories, they are of easy transit. The machinery affords an easy mode of transferring a manufacture from one country to another, and manufactories could be erected in a much shorter period of time than they could some years back. With respect to comparative advantages, there are some in favour of Great Britain, such as the easy supply of fuel; but is not cheapness of labour, is not cheapness of living, is not exemption

emption from heavy taxes, is not the advantage of easy export to a foreign market, at a much less freight, by a much more speedy conveyance, enabling them to reach the foreign market much earlier than the British merchant can, of the highest importance? Do not these considerations operate to invite the manufacturer there, or at least to carry from Great Britain a part of the manufacture which she now enjoys?

I beg with great humility to state these considerations to your Lordships, for the purpose of shewing that the fears of the petitioners are not altogether so visionary and so ridiculous as they are sometimes supposed to be, so light as to lie resting upon no grounds. I submit them as proper to be entertained by a wise and considerate mind, looking at the two countries, and upon all the probabilities of the subject, (and on both sides we are only reasoning upon probabilities) that there is reasonable ground to apprehend, that if the measure is adopted in the manner and to the extent it is proposed to be, that it will not be fruitless, but that there will be an exportation of wool to a considerable amount. That it will not be, as contended for, an inoperative and inefficacious measure, but will have its natural and proposed effect, that the allowance of an export will be followed
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by exportation; and in the degree that it is followed by exportation, even if it does not produce rival manufactures, yet for whatever purpose the wool of Great Britain is carried to Ireland to that degree, it will lessen the quantum of manufacture in Great Britain.

A witness has positively sworn, that the price of wool in Ireland exceeds the price of wool of a similar quantity in this country, and has done so for some years back. Is it not then probable that the Irish manufacturer will visit the English market, for the purpose of being supplied with a commodity he can obtain cheaper here than at home? It can therefore surely not be stated that there are not solid grounds to apprehend, that should the free exportation of wool be allowed, there will arise from thence a very considerable diminution in this country, of that, of which there is at present too little. But admitting such to be the consequences of allowing the export of wool to Ireland, still it is contended the measure is justifiable on another ground, viz. the right which Ireland will have in future to be considered as standing on the same footing, and entitled to the same privileges and rights as any county in England.

After the Union has taken place, and Ire-
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land and England are one, it is argued to be a narrow-minded jealousy, and an interested policy to be fearful of giving advantages to Ireland, even to our own loss.—Happy would it be for the empire if that country should be ameliorated by the accession of new manufactures, raised and fed by supplies from Great Britain. My Lords, I hope it will not be imputed to those, for whom I appear, that they have acted a selfish or dishonorable part upon this subject. It is not from any mean or selfish apprehensions of the competition that they oppose this measure; it is not from any wish to prevent Ireland from enjoying what it ought to enjoy, the growth and produce of its own country, and every fair advantage which can be derived from working it up into manufactures. But it cannot surely be said to be an unreasonable request on the part of the British manufacturer, that he should not be forced to part with to another, that of which the entire use is wanted for himself, that which is essentially necessary for the existence of his own manufacture.—Surely it is not unreasonable to expect that he ought not individually to suffer, without compensation, a heavy and grievous loss; that his trade ought not to be made a sacrifice for the benefit of Ireland.

But,

But, my Lords, let us examine a little further into the subject, and see whether the argument be well founded, that the Union does give to Ireland a right to claim an instant participation in all the benefits of trade and commerce equally with Great Britain. A comparison has been made, which has, I am afraid, been productive of great fallacy in the reasoning upon this subject. Our opponents have endeavored to assimilate Ireland after the Union takes place to an English county, and have contended that after that event we might as well propose to prohibit the export of wool from Somersetshire or Suffex, into Northumberland or Yorkshire as into Ireland. Give me leave, my Lords, to consider how well this argument is founded.—Is this the plan upon which the articles of Union, now before your Lordships, are framed?—Does the Union of both countries for all purposes take place immediately? Is Ireland to be immediately identified with England, for the purposes of an equal participation of benefit, and an equal participation of burthen?—Is it not in many respects, for a time at least, directly the reverse?

My Lords, consider first what will be the inequality for twenty years to come, the fixed inequality

equality in the ratio of contributions by each country, to the general expences of the empire, founded on an estimate of their relative abilities, in the proportion of fifteen to two in favor of Ireland.—Is that the case with any county of Great Britain?—Does any county of Great Britain pay a proportional contribution only according to its wealth?—No. Then any county of Great Britain and Ireland do not in this respect stand upon the same footing, nor ought, during the continuance of this inequality, to be considered as intitled equally to the same privileges, because it is not reasonable to treat them as one and the same, for the purpose of benefit, when they are not to be so for the purpose of burthen. It may be said, Oh, but this is the relative ability.—Ireland cannot support a heavier contribution. We tax Ireland in the proportion it is able to bear. I do not mean to question that,—I have no doubt the relative ability is wisely, justly, and rightly calculated.—All I mean to state is, that so long as there is that disproportion in contribution, so long is Ireland not treated as being one with England, nor constituting a part of it, it is a fallacy so to consider Ireland; and therefore though it might not be just to refuse to any county of Great Britain to participate equally in all the
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produce of any other country, yet the argument does not hold, or apply to Ireland under these circumstances.

Further, my Lords, if the ratio of contribution be calculated upon the present relative wealth of the two countries, let us consider a moment how that presses against any transfer of that, which is the best source of wealth to England, which constitutes a chief part of that very ability upon which the calculation is founded, a transfer during that period of time, whilst the proportion of fifteen to two is to continue, which destroys the basis upon which the whole plan rests. Is it just, is it reasonable, to make Great Britain pay according to the quantum of manufacture which it enjoyed in the year 1799, reckoning upon a full entire unparticipated enjoyment of all its wool: is it fair to take that as a ground of computation, and then to adopt a measure that will gradually transfer a part of that very manufacture? Every pack of wool that goes out of the country, does destroy the relative ability between Great Britain and Ireland, in a double proportion, as it augments the ability of the one, and diminishes the ability of the other—and in proportion as this cause operates during this period of twenty years, so far it destroys the principle upon
which

which the proportional contribution is founded. If therefore the argument of a comparison of Ireland with a county of Great Britain be well-founded, the measure ought at least to be postponed till Ireland stands in the predicament of being one for all purposes of burthen with England ; it cannot at all events till then, with any justice or propriety, be made one for all purposes of benefit.

Again, my Lords, consider other points, wherein the comparison fails :—Is Ireland treated as one with England, with respect to any of the subjects of the seventh article of the union ? It is therein proposed, that there shall be in future protecting duties, to equalize the commodities exported from one country into the other?—Is there any such arrangement between any one county of Great Britain and another ? Did any body ever hear of protecting duties on the transfer of any articles, in proportion to the relative wealth or ability, or any of the criterions upon which that is determined, between the remotest corners of Wales and the Metropolis, or any other differently circumstanced parts of England or Great Britain?—No, then we have here another point of view, in which, for a certain period of time at least, the argument is not well-founded, which supposes Ireland put upon the same footing, by the arti-

cles of union, with a county of this kingdom. It is treated as a different kingdom, or at least as differently circumstanced for a time; and it is therefore proposed, the growing manufactures of Ireland should be guarded by protecting duties, to prevent their destruction by the introduction of commodities from this country. As long as that protection exists, it affords another argument against the claim of Ireland to an equal participation of benefit. In another respect Ireland is treated in the 1st article of union, as continuing a distinct country.

The surplus of revenue raised in Ireland over and above the proportional contribution of Ireland, is not to go into the general purse of the state, to be applied generally, like the contribution of every county in this kingdom, to all the burthens of the Empire, but is to be wholly, separately, and exclusively applied to the benefit of Ireland. There again the separate benefit of Ireland is provided for as a distinct country.—Is that the case with any county of Great Britain?—No.—In this respect therefore, there is and will continue to be after the union, a dissimilitude between Ireland and a county of Great Britain. In many other points of view in which Ireland is considered in the articles of union, for purposes of burthen and making of regulations with respect to trade and commerce,

commerce, it is put upon a different footing with England.

At the close of the 7th article, there are certain enumerated articles, which are made matter of exception, and not to be comprehended within the general liberty of export from one country into the other—namely, corn, meal, biscuits, and flour; these articles are to be left open, as we trust your Lordships will leave the raw material of our manufacture, as being the growth and produce of each country, to the wisdom of the Imperial parliament to regulate, as circumstances shall from time to time render fitting.

The principle of this provision is, that when any article, the growth or produce of either country, is an article of prime necessity, and may be wholly wanted by either country, then that each country should have that preference in the separate and primary use of it, which nature has given to each; that the two countries, in such case, cannot be identified, but each must be kept distinct. My Lords, it is in that predicament we wish the wool of each country to be placed; that the growth and produce of each country should be confined to each, if in the judgment of the Imperial parliament the circumstances of each should create

a demand, in either, or both, for the whole of what each can produce.

But even if Ireland were immediately on the union, equally to participate in all the burthens of the state, yet there is another point of view in which the question may be considered, from which I submit Ireland would not be entitled to claim the free export from Great Britain, of this particular article. In the use and enjoyment of its own wool, Great Britain is entitled, I conceive, to preference over Ireland—first, because it is the growth and produce of its own soil: *ceteris paribus*, this alone gives a just ground of preference—it is the free gift of Providence to Great Britain. The superiority of its wool is principally owing to the advantages arising from its climate and soil: Great Britain is therefore first entitled to enjoy it, and ought, if it has occasion for the whole, to be permitted to retain it. But this is not all—there is another circumstance of decisive preference in favour of Great Britain; I mean the prior establishment of a manufactory, raised and supported upon the basis of the sole and exclusive possession of this article. Is not the difference most obvious, between taking away from one country a manufacture already established in it, and creating a new one in another, where one does not yet exist? If any equal and impartial

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tribunal fairly considered the state of the two countries, to which would it say ought wool to be given, or by which ought it to be retained? ought not Great Britain to be allowed to retain an article, the whole of which is actually worked up into a most important and extensive manufacture; upon which a vested capital of six millions is employed; which at this moment actually yields to the state so considerable a revenue; which forms so great a proportion of the annual exports of the kingdom; which employs so large a number of persons, who must be thrown out of employment if the manufacture be removed from Great Britain? The condition of Great Britain will be altered if you take from Great Britain her wool, or any part of its manufacture. Not so with respect to Ireland. By allowing Great Britain to continue to enjoy, as she now does exclusively, her own wool, the condition of Ireland will not be changed: she will continue to apply herself to other manufactures; she may extend the spirit of adventure to other subjects; a continuance of the prohibition on the export could not therefore operate with equal prejudice to Ireland, as the abolition of it would to Great Britain. The West Riding of Yorkshire, and other

other places in which the manufactory flourishes, would, if it were withdrawn, be reduced to the miserable state to which Bocking and other places, from a similar cause, have been shewn to be reduced ; with augmented poor's rates, an industrious poor left out of employment, a large capital sunk in works that have become in a great degree useless, the value of the land and all its produce proportionably diminished, with all the other disadvantages that unavoidably follow, when a manufacture is withdrawn from a country where it was once established ; such will be the state and condition of Great Britain, if there be any reduction of the manufacture established in it. Upon this ground therefore, if there were no other, I hope your Lordships will think, that of the two competitors for the wool of Great Britain, Great Britain is entitled preferably to continue in the sole exclusive enjoyment of her native commodity, which has hitherto been constantly secured to her by the wisdom and justice of parliament.

My Lords, there is only one other point of view in which I would, with great submission, present this subject to your Lordships consideration : and that is, the probability of the allowance of an export of British wool to Ireland, operating to produce the export of it to other countries.

countries.—This measure has uniformly been treated by our opponents merely as the means of supplying Ireland.—But, with great submission, I beg to state what the Petitioners conceive to be a reasonable ground of apprehension, that if you permit British wool to be exported to Ireland, you permit the export of it to every part of Europe. The time may arrive when it may become again a favorite object of foreign acquisition, as your Lordships know it has been heretofore, and as was fully proved when the subject was under the consideration of your Lordships and the other House of Parliament, in the year 1788.—It was then established in evidence, that there had been clandestinely exported from hence to France, no less than 13,000 packs of British wool a year, for the sake of the advantage arising from working up the long combing wool of Great Britain in the proportion of one to three with the wool of France in their manufactures.—If France ever should recover its trade and manufactures, or any other neighbouring country, to whom the wool of England is an object of acquisition, no doubt they will endeavor to obtain the possession of it,—surely then it is impossible not to see that permitting the export to Ireland will facilitate the export to other countries, both in its way to Ireland, and after it has
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arrived there from the numerous bays and ports that surround every part of that island. We know that all the fleet of England has been found unequal to guard the coasts of that country against a foreign enemy, even with the previous knowledge of its intended aggression, so as to prevent an occasional landing, notwithstanding every exertion of the best skill and vigilance that human ability and foresight could possibly use. How impossible will it then be for any effectual means to be used to surround that country by day and by night, so as to preclude all opportunity of vessels escaping from different ports and creeks in that country, to export from thence whatever wool a foreign customer may require;—this I humbly state as an additional ground to apprehend a future diminution of the quantity of British wool from the proposed exportation.

These, my Lords, are the grounds, very imperfectly detailed, of the apprehensions entertained by the Petitioners. They hope they will at least be deemed of sufficient weight, not to procure from your Lordships an immediate decision, perpetuating for ever the prohibition of the export of wool, but only to prevent the immediate and irrevocable adoption of a contrary decision: from the alarming danger and magnitude of the question, they
request

request your Lordships to pause, to postpone your determination upon it, not to bind yourselves in a matter of at least so much uncertainty and doubt, at once, without further examination or enquiry, to a system of policy that you may hereafter repent of, and be unable to rectify. If the woollen manufacturers should be exposed by the adoption of this measure, to the losses and mischiefs they apprehend; if the trade, manufacture, and commerce of Great Britain should deeply suffer; if numbers of the industrious poor should be thrown out of employment; if the poor rates should be greatly augmented; if the landed interest should fatally suffer in the result, no remedy would be left; if the export of wool should be made an indissoluble article of Union, all your Lordships power of giving relief upon the subject would be for ever abandoned; upon this ground it is that we pray your Lordships, with pressing importunity, but with great humility, to withhold the fatal vote.—We request your Lordships, as our last hope, that you will stand by us in the hour of danger. It is not a light subject that is at stake.

The preservation and existence of the most ancient manufacture of Great Britain is threatened,—the great basis, as my Lord Hale has said,

said, of all its commerce, which has stood by her for all ages, and afforded strength, and vigour, and life to her exertions throughout all the vicissitudes of times, in all our wars and all our exigencies. In the earliest periods of our history, this has been the pride and strength of Great Britain.—It was the great resource, by the help of which the three Edwards contended successfully, against the power of France. It is still the faithful protector and support of the country in the present arduous conflict with the same inveterate enemy.—Do not, my Lords, withdraw your protection; maintain it as the best and surest source of the wealth and strength of Great Britain. It has been hitherto, in every age, and under every reign, the ruling policy, and the wisdom of the legislature, to protect this native commodity and manufacture by the safeguards it has thrown round them.—Under this salutary system of laws the manufacture has grown up to its present size; and by means of its aid Great Britain has become the mighty nation it now is. We pray your Lordships not to abolish this ancient and approved system, at least not at once to abolish it for ever;—to preserve to your Lordships the power of legislating upon this subject, as the future state of circumstances may require;—not to depart at
once

once from all that the wisdom and experience of your ancestors has sanctioned, and at the same time to deprive yourselves for ever of the means of correcting the evils too certain to flow from the innovation.

My Lords, I have now concluded what I had to offer to your Lordships on behalf of the Petitioners; I return your Lordships my humble acknowledgements for the great attention with which you have been pleased to honor me; and have only to add the full confidence reposed by the Petitioners in the wisdom and justice of your Lordships, and the assurance they feel, that they shall not now, for the first time, retire from your Lordships bar without a continuance of that protection, to which they trust they have not forfeited their title, and which they have never yet failed to receive from the legislature of Great Britain.

THE END.

